

JUNE 5, 2006

The American Conservative

Out of
Iraq



Into
Darfur?

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

Replying to Mr. Buchanan's column, "Can We Win an Insurgents' War?" (May 22), I would like to point out that what Bush said he wanted to do was to 1.) achieve regime change and 2.) remove weapons of mass destruction.

As to the first, we accomplished that with the surrender of Saddam to our forces. As to the second, those weapons, if any were there, are not there now, so if we pull out it can't be said that we "cut and ran" with the job only half done.

It cannot be said that the U.S. was defeated without first saying there was some never announced third objective that we left without accomplishing.

When Reagan went into Grenada, he achieved regime change and got out. When Bush Sr. went into Panama, he achieved regime change and got out. What are waiting for?

JIM WARE

Baton Rouge, La.

WHOSE WAR?

Dan McCarthy ends his exceedingly mild criticism of my comments in *Neoconned! Just War Principles* with this reproach directed against the current Right: "This is the great shame to all of us who call ourselves conservatives, but there is no denying the fact. The rot runs deeper than neoconservatism" (May 8). In fact, I couldn't agree more with any statement, and a book of mine on the American conservative movement that is now in press underlines and documents the same point. "A Conservative War?" was certainly not conceived to absolve anyone for marching in lockstep behind the fools' crusade for democracy in Iraq. And I do mention without the slightest sympathy "misguided patriots" and Republican hacks who have rallied to Bush's foreign policy.

But the focus of my essay is the critical differences between a truly conservative war and the one that the neoconservatives have incited. If the neoconservatives had not captured this administration, those "who supported

the war without prompting from neoconservative censors" would not have this particular struggle to celebrate. In this sense we have all been engulfed in a war fueled by neoconservative ideology. But this should not be interpreted to suggest that other self-described conservatives do not merit scorn for this and other far-leftist delusions and their far-reaching consequences.

Needless to say, I rejoice at Dan's efforts to warn us about how much ground on the Right our side will have to take back in order to become politically competitive.

PAUL GOTTFRIED

Elizabethtown, Pa.

Daniel McCarthy replies:

Professor Gottfried is very generous, and he is quite right that there is little difference between us on this matter. What distinction there is may be a matter of emphasis: although the neoconservatives were the agitators behind the Iraq War, conservatives more generally—apart from the small remnant of strict noninterventionists and George Kennan realists—have eagerly supported every war waged by a Republican president in modern times. Even without the neocons, had Bush decided to invade Iraq—or a Panama, Grenada, or any other nation of dubious strategic importance—there is every reason to believe most conservatives still would have supported him.

SUPREME COURTIER

In "Conservative Crack-Up," Pat Buchanan outlines conflicting views as to whether George W. Bush is truly a conservative (April 24). While some of the president's policies may not pass conservative standards, Pat praises the president with respect to taxes, sovereignty, and Supreme Court appointees Roberts and Alito.

However, the selection of these justices raises difficult questions about what it means to be a conservative. It is one thing to pick justices who "reject the activism of the Warren Court"; it is

quite another matter to favor the Imperial Presidency.

This will not, in my view, be a truly conservative court if it ends up rubber stamping a steady accretion of executive power, along with more and more covert decision-making and unlimited pre-emptive authority. It will not be a conservative court if it infringes on the separation of powers by setting one man above the law.

IRWIN SHISHKO

Chesterfield, Va.

CRACKING CODEWORDS

I think James Bovard hits the nail on the head: "The administration seems to have learned nothing from its democracy debacles of the last four years. But perhaps the rhetoric has all been a ruse. Perhaps invoking 'democracy' is simply a smokescreen in pursuit of the neoconservative goal of 'benevolent global hegemony.'" (April 24).

Considering the extent to which the Bush regime has pulled out all the stops to undermine American democracy—warrantless surveillance, secret prisons, incommunicado detention without charges or trial, torture, assertion of executive authority to defy laws passed by Congress—I can't for the life of me understand why anyone has been willing to give this crew any credit for being sincere in their pronouncements about democracy abroad.

"Democracy" is just today's codeword for "pro-American"—it has simply taken the place of the codeword "Free World" as it was used in the Cold War era.

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[PRESIDENCY]

SCOFFLAW IN CHIEF

A little less than a decade ago, Republicans reminded the country that the president is not above the law in the matter of President Clinton's perjury over his sexual antics. George W. Bush has indeed restored dignity to the Oval Office. Unfortunately, he has not restored the rule of law. Far from it—according to an analysis by the *Boston Globe*, Bush has taken it upon himself to flout no fewer than 750 laws passed since he took office.

Bush subscribes to a novel notion of constitutional jurisprudence that makes the president nearly equal to the Supreme Court in deciding which laws are constitutional. When Bush believes a law encroaches on presidential power—examples include congressional bans on torture and the use of illegally obtained evidence, as well as laws to protect whistleblowers—he either ignores it or issues a “signing statement” reserving the right to ignore it or apply an interpretation clearly at odds with congressional intent.

“This is an attempt by the president to have the final word on his own constitutional powers, which eliminates the checks and balances that keep the country a democracy,” Bruce Fein, a Reagan administration deputy attorney general, told the *Globe*. “There is no way for an independent judiciary to check his assertions of power”—at least within the secretive realm of national-security policy—and Congress isn't doing it, either. So this is moving us toward an unlimited executive power.”

[IRAQ]

EMBASSY ROW

The *Washington Post* reports that political appointees at the Department of Agriculture recently received an e-mail: “The President has requested that all members of his cabinet and sub-cabinet incorporate message points on the Global War on Terror into speeches.”



They are to remind audiences that “President Bush has a clear strategy for victory in Iraq”—just the sort of thing seamlessly integrated when discussing farm subsidies.

But coherence is a minor point compared to the greater problem: it's simply untrue. If the new \$592 million American embassy in Baghdad is any indication, far from declaring victory and coming home, the U.S. appears to be hunkering down for the long haul,

The 104-acre compound—comparable in size to Vatican City and ten times larger than a typical embassy—includes 21 buildings behind a 15-foot wall. Since electricity comes on only four hours per day and clean water is problematic in the rest of Baghdad, the embassy will include its own power generator and water purification plant—along with a swimming pool, gym, food court, and six apartment buildings. Four American “superbases” are also planned, complete with neighborhoods for contractors and an indoor golf course—not that we're going to be a permanent presence, the administration still assures. It's all just part of the “clear strategy for victory.”

[IMMIGRATION]

JOSE, CAN YOU SEE?

Illegal immigrants marching under foreign flags, “the Star-Spangled Banner” sung in Spanish to a Latin beat—to Nancy Pelosi, it can only mean one thing: “Hispanics are clearly vested in our country and want to continue to

contribute to the strength of our nation.” So she told the nation in a Cinco de Mayo broadcast, while President Bush called on immigrants to learn English—surprising because during the 2000 campaign he put considerable effort into Hispandering in Spanish. As Kevin Phillips reported in *American Dynasty*, Bush “would drop in at Hispanic festivals and parties, sometimes joining in singing ‘The Star-Spangled Banner’ in Spanish.” Outgoing White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan denied that, saying Bush “couldn't possibly sing the national anthem in Spanish. He's not that good with his Spanish.”

The Spanish version of the national anthem, “Nuestro Himno,” signals more than just that “Hispanics are clearly vested in our country.” It also shows that even the record-producing scion of one of Britain's leading Marxist families knows how to bring in the Benjamins when opportunity calls. The mastermind behind “Nuestro Himno” is Adam Kidron, the son, as *TAC*'s Steve Sailer has pointed out, of a man eulogized by Britain's *Socialist Review* as “probably the most important Marxist economist of his generation.” Adam combines his father's passion for Third World causes with an appreciation of capitalism: as well as selling “Nuestro Himno,” he's also purchased Al Sharpton's million-man mailing list for marketing purposes. Sounds like he has the makings of a future Bush “Pioneer”—perhaps as part of a bilingual George P. campaign in 2012.

[MEDIA]

NO AMNESTY—YET

After publishing a few solid anti-amnesty pieces, *National Review* appears to be engaging in a little mixed messaging on immigration. An editorial posted on the magazine's website begins by taking to task unnamed conservatives who regard immigration reformers as "yahoos" but then takes a wobbly turn.

NR gives congressional Republican leaders the following advice: get tough on the border—and then capitulate. "Once we have brought illegal immigration under control," they urge the GOP to say, "we will consider increasing legal immigration levels and granting an amnesty to some illegal immigrants who are already here." A cover story last month also floated an increase in legal immigration after stepping up enforcement, as if that is much different from the grand guest-workers compromise.

Perhaps *National Review* wants to triangulate, putting itself between *The Weekly Standard* and real immigration reformers. Or maybe the editors are preparing for an eventual endorsement of amnesty, in keeping with their idea that conservatism entails support for yesterday's liberalism. Readers who oppose any kind of amnesty—today or tomorrow—and favor reducing legal immigration to manageable levels should now know where the post-Buckley *National Review* stands. Athwart history, indeed.

[STRATEGY]

REHEATED COLD WAR

Having already jettisoned the containment policy that won the Cold War in favor of reckless pre-emption, perhaps Dick Cheney now wishes to reverse that victory itself. At least that's the impression the vice president's incendiary remarks made in the Russian media.

Speaking in Lithuania, Cheney accused the Russian government of violating its

citizens' rights, backsliding on democracy, and using its energy reserves to intimidate its neighbors. But there is apparently nothing intimidating in an ultimatum from the vice president of the United States: "Russia has a choice to make." Russian officials and media outlets rightly interpreted Cheney's comments as an attempt to provoke Moscow and intervene in its internal affairs. Cheney, naturally, is bewildered by the response. He says his comments were "fairly measured."

Vladimir Putin's regime certainly deserves some criticism, but not the kind of bull-in-a-china shop "diplomacy" that Cheney personifies. As the White House fantasizes about World War IV and revisits Cold War tensions, it might well ponder how many enemies America really needs.

[TRENDS]

WARDS OF THE STATE

According to *USA Today*, those Americans enjoying the sharpest rise in personal income over the past five years weren't those who built better mouse-traps. Those who built anything at all—from furniture to Fords—were the big losers, with North Carolina recording its sixth-worst drop and former manufacturing powerhouses Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois reaching their lowest ranks in per capita income.

The winner, Wyoming—with its significant coal, natural gas, and oil reserves—can thank higher energy prices and low population for its first-place per-capita growth. Close behind came Maryland and Virginia, states nestled next to Leviathan, where incomes have spiked 19.8 percent since 2000—keeping pace with a 22 percent spending boom.

That's grim news for a country that still preaches freedom. For if our most prosperous pocket owes its affluence to government, wealth can only grow as the state does—a condition no Republic can long endure. ■

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The Persecution of the Palestinians

“Why do they hate us?” So stunned Americans asked, after 9/11, when we learned that across the Arab world, many were saying, “The Americans had it coming.”

For a textbook example of why we are hated, consider Gaza and the West Bank. There, a brutal Israeli/U.S.-led cutoff in aid has been imposed on the Palestinians for voting the wrong way in a free election.

Immediately after Hamas's victory, Israel halted the \$55 million a month the Palestinian Authority received as its share of tax and customs revenue. Israel demanded Europe and the U.S. also end all aid to the PA until Hamas renounces terror, recognizes Israel, and disarms.

President Bush, though he was conducting a worldwide crusade for democracy and had urged that the Palestinian elections be held and Hamas participate, obediently complied. For months now, U.S. and European aid to the PA, half its budget, has been halted.

The early returns are in. “Surgeons at Gaza's biggest hospital,” says the *Financial Times*, “have suspended non-essential surgery for lack of sutures, laboratory kits and anesthetics.” Environmental protection agency workers have no money for petrol to monitor sewage and industrial waste entering the water supply. Some 150,000 civil servants, 60,000 of them armed security personnel, have gone unpaid for months.

Supermarkets have to extend credit to customers who have no money for food. The *Washington Post* relates an incident that gives a flavor of what is happening.

“In Gaza's gold market Monday, Nahed al-Zayim stared at the wedding ring her husband, a Palestinian police officer, gave her six years ago. She had placed it on a glass counter offering it

for sale, joining several other wives of public employees who had not been paid in two months...

“Her head covered by a black veil, Zayim said she needed the proceeds from her ring to buy diapers and milk supplements for her three children, including Hazem, 4, who tugged at her tunic in the afternoon bustle. ‘This is the last one, we have no more,’ Zayim, 28, said of her ring.”

Woodrow Wilson called sanctions “the silent, deadly remedy.” Its victims are always the sick, the elderly, the women, and the children.

In March, the World Bank predicted the aid cutoff would lead to a 30 percent fall in average personal incomes among the Palestinians. The bank now considers that prediction “too rosy” and expects “the worst year in the West Bank and Gaza's recent dismal economic history.”

Already, violent clashes have broken out between Hamas and Fatah. There is a danger of collapse of the Palestinian Authority, chaos, and a need for the Israeli army to intervene anew to restore order. Finally, May 9, under European pressure, the U.S. relented and a trickle of aid began to flow.

Query: who, besides al-Qaeda and recruiters of suicide bombers, can conceivably benefit from persecuting the Palestinian people like this? Does President Bush or Condi Rice think the Palestinians will respect an America that did this to their children, after we urged this election, called for Hamas to participate, and preached our devotion to democracy?

“The aid cut-off appears to be increasing anti-U.S. sentiment here,” writes the

Post's Scott Wilson, quoting 33-year-old pharmacist Mustafa Hasoona: “The problem is the West, not us. ... If they don't respect democracy, they shouldn't call for it. ... We are with this government we elected. I voted for it.”

According to the *Financial Times*, Hamas is winning converts for refusing to buckle. Said Khalil Abu Leila, a Hamas leader, “They have misunderstood the Arab mentality. As long as the pressure increases on Hamas, the more popular it will become.”

The White House says we don't negotiate with terrorists. But when we had to, we did. FDR and Truman summited with Stalin at Yalta and Potsdam. Nixon met with Mao in Beijing. Kissinger negotiated with the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese at Paris. Bush I allied with Assad in the Gulf War. Clinton had Arafat to the White House too many times to count.

Rabin and Peres shared a Nobel Prize with Arafat. Netanyahu gave him Hebron. Barak offered him 95 percent of the West Bank.

Bush's agents negotiated with the architect of the Lockerbie massacre to persuade Colonel Khadafi to give up his WMD. In 2004, Bush's men called it a victory for Bush diplomacy. Khadafi's regime had been at the top of the State Department's list of state sponsors of terror.

The purpose of U.S.-Israeli policy today is to punish the Palestinians for how they voted and to force Hamas to yield or to collapse its government. How does such a policy win hearts and minds for America?

Terrorism has been described as waging war on innocents to break their political leaders. Is that not a fair description of what we are doing to the Palestinians? No wonder they hate us. ■

[around the world in 8 years]

Out of Iraq, Into Darfur?

When it comes to military intervention unrelated to the national interest, the globalist Left is no better than the neocon Right.

By Justin Raimondo

“OUT OF IRAQ, INTO DARFUR”—a picture is worth a thousand words, and in the case of the Associated Press photographer who captured an image of the recent “Save Darfur” demonstration in Washington, perhaps two or three thousand. These words on a neatly printed sign, held aloft by one Laura Cacho, an employee of Working Assets, the liberal do-gooder investment outfit, say about all there is to say about the moral confusion and contradiction that underlies the recent campaign to bamboozle the U.S. into intervening in Sudan. In view of the complex realities on the ground in that tortured land, one may as well say “Out of the frying pan, into the fire.”

It’s a scenario familiar enough to induce a frisson of déjà-vu: a humanitarian disaster is declared in a far-off land, a country that few ordinary Americans have ever heard of and even fewer know anything about. We are told that we must intervene or be cast in the role of selfish Western isolationists. And we don’t have much time to think about it, we are informed, because this is an emergency: we must act now or lose our souls.

This is moral blackmail. We are supposed to accept unthinkingly the premise that of course we have to help victims of genocide—we are morally obliged to drop everything and come to

the aid of our fellow human beings, without knowing too much about the specifics of the case. And you’ll notice that, amid all the self-righteous bombast and posturing by pundits and politicians over Darfur, we hear very little in the way of specifics.

We are told that as many as 300,000 may have been killed and that the country is in the throes of a bloody civil war, but we aren’t told much about the various combatants, except that the dreaded Janjaweed militia—and, standing behind them, the Sudanese government—are the bad guys. As for the good guys—the rebels in the south—they are for all intents and purposes invisible, as far as the American media is concerned. Also practically invisible: the causes of the decades-long civil war, really two civil conflicts, the first stretching from 1955-1972, the second commencing in 1983 and continuing to the present day.

In southern Sudan, where people live on a subsistence level, many of the deaths are the result of the conflict’s ancillary effects: the lack of investment, the collapse of the minimal infrastructure, and famine. Did the deep poverty of the people contribute to or even cause the civil war, or is it the other way around? While the ongoing civil strife has certainly added to the death toll, the idea that the country would be livable

even in the absence of the warring parties seems like wishful thinking. And if the root cause of the civil war is the country’s lack of development, then military intervention by the West will not solve the problem—and is more likely to exacerbate it.

If the foreign policy of the United States is to be predicated on a simple morality tale of good guys versus bad guys rather than an objective determination of the national interest, then we have to ask: who are the good guys in this story? The answer has to be that there aren’t any.

In one corner, we have the Sudanese government, headed by President Omar el-Bashir and dominated by Arab-speaking northerners: the ruling National Congress Party has its roots in the Muslim Brotherhood, founded in Egypt in the 1940s. There is no real political opposition allowed, and the various factions of the National Congress disagree only over how and to what extent *sharia* law should be imposed. They have ruthlessly suppressed regional separatist movements, such as the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) in the west (Darfur) and the Anya Nya movement in the south. From 1990-1996, they played host to Osama bin Laden, whose friend and associate Dr. Hassan ‘Abd Allah al-Turabi, at the time a top official in Sudan’s

government, invited him. As leader of the National Islamic Front, Turabi's goal was the creation of an Islamic state in Sudan. In 1989, he and his party overthrew the elected parliament and installed a military dictatorship. What followed, as Human Rights Watch avers, was some pretty nasty stuff:

From that time until 2001, Turabi was the power behind the throne, whether as leader of the NIF or later as speaker of the assembly. He led the creation of the NIF police state and associated NIF militias to consolidate Islamist power and prevent a popular uprising. The NIF police state and militias committed many human rights abuses, including summary executions, torture, ill treatment, arbitrary detentions, denial of freedoms of speech, assembly, and religion, and violations of the rules of war, particularly in the south, where a civil war was being waged from 1983 to the present.

Turabi, a hard-line Islamist, fell out with the Sudanese government around the time bin Laden was expelled at America's insistence. Accusing his former confreres in Khartoum of selling out to the U.S., he was jailed; after being placed in solitary confinement and held without trial, he was released last year. Turabi has since set up his own guerrilla group, which is deeply involved in the Darfur fighting, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). The JEM is based in nearby Eritrea, where U.S. influence is strong.

The SPLA has its roots in the Anya Nya guerrilla units created by dissident southerners in the Sudanese army who were dissatisfied with northern domination of the army and the state. On Aug. 18, 1955, the Sudanese Army's Equatoria Corps mutinied, and, as the government moved to crush the revolt, the mutineers fled

into the bush and lived to fight another day. Garnering support from Ethiopia and Eritrea—both eager to avenge Sudan's support for Muslim rebels within their own borders—the rebels gained ground, and Khartoum was forced to the negotiating table. An accord was hammered out, with regional autonomy granted to the southerners. The civil war resumed, however, in 1983, when President Gafar Mohammad al-Nimeiri announced the immediate imposition of *sharia* law throughout the country.

THE *SUNDAY TIMES* REVEALED THAT THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION "LAUNCHED A COVERT CAMPAIGN TO DESTABILIZE THE GOVERNMENT OF SUDAN ..."

Anya Nya was revived, but soon split apart, largely due to the ambitions of John Garang, a former Sudanese army officer who had been sent by Khartoum to crush the rebels and ended up joining them. Garang had a nasty habit of executing his factional rivals, and the rebel movement splintered. He went on to establish the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA), which started out life as a Marxist revolutionary group.

In 1983, at the founding meeting of his "liberation army," Garang ranted:

The anarchy in production, the separatist tendencies in the various regions of our beloved country, the moral decay and all the ills that I have enumerated can only be solved within the context of a united Sudan under a socialist system that affords democratic and human rights to all nationalities and guarantees freedom to all religions, beliefs, and outlooks.

Garang is another one of those former Marxists who looked to Washington for support after the Kremlin fell. When pro-Soviet, ultra-left rhetoric failed to make any headway with the Sudanese masses

and—far worse—failed to garner much-needed contributions from abroad to the SPLA's depleted coffers, Garang looked elsewhere for ideological-financial inspiration. He soon found it in the form of military aid from the U.S. and Israel, filtered in through neighboring countries.

The history of American support for this brigand, and the ruthless brutality employed by his liberation army, predates the Bush presidency. Perhaps this accounts, in part, for the "Out of Iraq,

into Darfur" contingent's brazen inconsistency. As the *Boston Globe* reported back in December 1999, "To the peril of regional stability, the Clinton Administration has used northern Uganda as a military training ground for southern Sudanese rebels fighting the Muslim government of Khartoum." Not that this was any great secret: the *Sunday Times* had earlier revealed that the Clinton administration "launched a covert campaign to destabilize the government of Sudan. ... More than \$20m of military equipment, including radios, uniforms and tents will be shipped to Eritrea, Ethiopia and Uganda in the next few weeks. Although the equipment is earmarked for the armed forces of those countries, much of it will be passed on to the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), which is preparing an offensive against the government in Khartoum."

The strategic goal of Garang's gang is to spread chaos, as the *New York Times* reported on March 3, 1996, "[Garang's] explicit strategy was to render south Sudan ungovernable, and in that he succeeded. The South today is not only ungovernable but virtually uninhabitable." *The Economist* characterized the

U.S.-backed rebels as “little more than an armed gang” engaged in “killing, looting, and raping. Its indifference, almost animosity, towards the people it was supposed to be ‘liberating’ was all too clear.” Garang died while on a visit to one of his foreign sponsors: Uganda’s presidential helicopter crashed into a mountainside, ending the bloody career of a ruthless killer whose legacy of nihilistic violence lives on.

Sen. Barack Obama and House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi spoke at the Washington rally to “save Darfur,” and yet we heard not one word out of their mouths about the Clinton administration’s role in creating the Darfur disaster. An apology from these two would be too much to expect; a simple admission would do. But don’t hold your breath waiting for it. Much of the clamor for intervention by the Democratic Left seems to be a continuation of the old Clintonian policy of meddling in Sudan’s internal affairs, playing the regime-change game by subsidizing various guerrilla proxies. Now they demand outright American military intervention to clean up the mess they created.

It’s odd that U.S. military intervention in Sudan doesn’t qualify as a “war for oil,” at least in certain quarters, although the invasion of Iraq apparently does. In 1978, Chevron discovered substantial oil reserves in the south of the country, and today a Chinese state-owned oil company has a substantial investment there. China is Sudan’s single largest trading partner. That may change if power passes to a separatist government, especially one allied with one or another of the various foreign-funded guerrilla groups, such as the SPLA. Control of a territory with oil reserves of 563 million barrels—and possibly more—is a prize of increasing value, and if it has to be won in the name of “humanitarianism,” rather than the “war on terror,” then so be it.

If the decline and fall of CIA Director Porter Goss were a morality play, it might be entitled the “Revenge of Mary McCarthy” and feature characters with unlikely names like Kyle “Dusty” Foggo. Foggo, the agency executive director and Goss protégé who is currently under FBI investigation for fraud in contracting, has followed his boss out the door. It has been plausibly suggested that an impending indictment led to the abrupt and unscripted retirement of Goss in a brief White House ceremony that only lacked a pat on the back and a presidential assertion that Goss was “doin’ a heckuva job” as a prelude to being sent to Coventry. Bush enthused over Goss’s yeoman’s work helping “this agency ... become integrated into the intelligence community,” which reveals just how the president views the CIA and might lead some to question where the agency was before it was subsumed.

But it was the embarrassment of Mary McCarthy and everything she represented that brought Goss down. McCarthy was fired in April under direct orders from the normally managerially distant Goss ten days before she was due to retire. The CIA quickly leaked the story that she had revealed classified information on secret detention centers, but her “crime” was subsequently downgraded, with McCarthy insisting she had done no such thing and CIA spokesmen conceding that she had been fired only for unauthorized contact with a journalist. It was the Goss version of a Stalinist show trial, peculiarly misdirected as the overwhelming majority of leaks emanate from Congress and the executive branch, not from the agency. The McCarthy sacking was intended to send a message to CIA employees that no contact with the media would be condoned, deliciously ironic in that overseas journalists and spies frequently move symbiotically in the same circles.

McCarthy was the final humiliation, the culmination of a year-long exercise in identifying and bullying CIA officers who were held to be disloyal to the director and the White House. It involved serial intimidation by polygraph exams, hostile interrogations by security personnel, unsubtle inquiries into the political views of suspect senior officers, and increasingly hysterical generic threats leveled against staff, contractors, and even former employees. Its net result was to convert many proud intelligence professionals into inmates in the administration’s latest maximum-security facility. Many others, completely demoralized, opted for retirement. Recently and tellingly, CIA senior management added another criterion to what is permissible public interface by an agency employee: “it cannot impair the individual’s ability to do his or her job” in a “non-partisan and non-policy fashion.” Disagreement is out. Professional dissent now has a political dimension and security personnel can investigate any criticism of the administration, presumably up to and including something as innocuous as a newspaper letter to the editor. The prepublication review of former employees’ writings relating to the agency for possible leaks of classified material has also been broadened. The constitutional right to exercise free expression through the medium of a free press is now frequently denied on “context,” meaning that the piece can be blocked because it reveals how the CIA functions or what it is like to work for it.

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"Out of Iraq, into Darfur" means that there really isn't going to be any change in American foreign policy if and when the Democrats regain power. Once again, we'll be wading into an alien landscape without any real understanding of the ethnic and economic complexities that militate against order in the region. The conflict is presented, for Western consumption, as a clear-cut struggle between white hats and blacks hats, with the latter being the Janjaweed militia, said to be the creature of the Sudanese government. Yet Khartoum has arrested and executed several members of the Janjaweed and severely punished others—including amputating a few limbs as punishment for their crimes.

BOTH THE OSTENSIBLE LEFT AND THE NEOCONSERVATIVE RIGHT AGREE THAT DARFUR CAN AND OUGHT TO BE SAVED BY U.S. MILITARY INTERVENTION OF SOME SORT.

An unlikely coalition of liberal Democrats, Christian fundamentalists, and the Hollywood Left, including George Clooney, has taken it upon themselves to "save Darfur." The question is, who will save Darfur from our potentially murderous good intentions? Not that the liberal-Left wants to see U.S. air strikes at Sudanese military installations, laments Lawrence Kaplan in *The New Republic*:

The use of unilateral U.S. military power isn't the solution most Darfur activists have in mind. Even as western Sudan burns, Darfur advocates such as House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi argue that the United States must employ its military power only on behalf of—and, more important, in concert with—international organizations such as the United Nations. The Save Darfur Coalition, a leading umbrella group for organizations bent on

action, intends to save Darfur not by urging the Bush administration to launch air strikes against Sudan's murderous militias but by petitioning the White House to bolster funding for African Union peacekeepers and to lobby the United Nations.

The liberal internationalists of the Democratic party don't have the courage of their convictions, complains Kaplan: "The victims of Darfur can be saved by one thing and one thing alone: American power."

I would say that most of those who attended the "Save Darfur" rallies understood this, if only implicitly. Similar

demonstrations were held across the country, and the afternoon of the San Francisco rally I met a neighbor coming back from the event. She is the archetypal liberal, a former social worker, now retired, who hates Republicans, and she had on her "Save Darfur" T-shirt. She stopped to chat, assuming, of course, that I'd be sympathetic. She was upset that attendance had been so sparse. I averred that most Americans are a bit reluctant to launch a fresh military intervention at just this moment. This woman whom I know to be a staunch opponent of what she calls "Bush's war" in Iraq nodded sadly. But how, I said, can you be against invading Iraq but for marching into Sudan? "Oh," she cried, somewhat taken aback, "we have to do something about the terrible genocide." I looked at her askance and inquired, "Isn't that what they told us about Iraq?" She just stared at me and, looking somewhat frightened, barked, "Oh, never mind!" And with that she stalked away.

If the limousine liberals of my Pacific Heights neighborhood are not willing to be consistent, then certainly the neoconservatives are more than eager to make up the difference. Over at the *Weekly Standard*, references to the Bush administration's unwillingness to take up where Bill Clinton left off and plunge into the Sudanese quagmire are routinely made to underscore the difference between rhetoric and reality in this White House. In a screed entitled "The Need for Leadership in Darfur," Eddie Beaver wrote,

Until George W. Bush's presidency, America was either handicapped by Cold War reality or misled by politicians who mistrusted and misused the military. This is not so today. A president of honor and vision sits in the White House, emboldened by the threat of terrorism and fascism to defend America and her ideals. A fascist, terrorist supporting regime is exterminating its citizens by the tens of thousands. Why then, under the most fervent advocate of freedom and peace since Ronald Reagan, is America not justly using its mighty military force to stop them?

The cries of "Save Darfur!" underscore the narrowness of the foreign-policy debate in this country. Both the ostensible Left and the neoconservative Right agree that Darfur can and ought to be saved by U.S. military intervention of some sort. None can imagine the day when the Sudanese, north and south, east and west, will long to be saved from their would-be saviors. Both ignore the lessons of history, even as the stream of coffins coming in from Iraq continues unabated. ■

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The Day Laborers Took Off

A helpless American citizen copes with the illegal alien boycott.

By Dennis Dale

LIKE MANY OF US, I was caught unprepared by the Day Without an Immigrant boycott.

There was something odd about the voice coming through the speaker at my regular fast-food drive-through. I soon realized what it was: intelligible, unaccented English. Curious.

My order arrived a full 20 seconds later than I had come to expect. Still, I thought, perhaps these were jobs Americans could do. It was then that I realized the sullen and incompetent American-born employee had used far too much mayonnaise. I could hardly get my breakfast down.

At my local hardware store, I immediately sensed an eerie absence. The day-laborer hiring center was empty. Confused building contractors helplessly circled the ghostly space, uncomprehending. In that moment I had a vision of the dystopia that was about to descend.

Deciding to get a jump on the panic, I purchased lumber and nails to board up the house and as much water and food as I could carry to prepare for the inevitable societal collapse. I sped home and found my daughter there, only now realizing the boycott had been extended to schools. I rushed to her and held her close. "Thank God you're all right. Was the sudden lack of diversity too jarring? Oh, my precious little one, I'm so sorry! I didn't know! *I didn't know!*"

"Go ahead, dear," I said, "tell Daddy what happened."

"Well, everything was pretty quiet, actually." She had no idea of the peril we were in. I turned away slightly so that she wouldn't see the tears forming in her father's eyes.

"It was nice. No gang-bangers, no fights, no one harassing you in the halls."

These profoundly ugly, stereotyping words coming from my child shook me to my core. (I abhor racism. I abhor racism with every fiber of my being. I have dedicated my life to instilling this abhorrence of racism in my child every moment of every day.)

The sudden tipping of the balance in her school's fragile ethnosystem had already produced severe racial intolerance. It was clear her school was now toxically unrepresentative. How quickly the poisonous gas of racism fills any void.

We would have to work fast: we reviewed the anti-racist documentary "Blue Eyed" and I sedated her with two Ambien, buying time until a qualified diversity trainer could be found. Of course, precious time had been lost. However, I abhor racism. I abhor racism with every fiber of my being.

Peering out the window I realized the bougainvillea was blocking my view of the street. If I was to defend the house, I would need an unobstructed view of the street. This could only mean one thing. I would have to attempt yardwork.

I found a pair of clippers—ingenious but dangerous things—and bucked up my resolve with a shot of Jack Daniels. An hour later, I managed finally to extricate myself, bleeding and disoriented, from the thorny bushes. I retreated inside, unsuccessful.

I was forced to use the remaining Jack Daniels as an anesthetic, so my memory of events becomes hazy past this point. I have to rely on the following desperate log and what forensic evidence I could find to reconstruct the

events of that long, frenzied night:

19:00: Still no sign of societal collapse. Too quiet. Always a bad sign. Used reciprocating saw—somehow managed to figure it out despite no illegal immigrant help—to carve escape hatch in ceiling so we can escape directly to roof. Will return later—if it's safe.

20:01: Trying to cook for myself with tender, incapable Anglo hands mangled by attempt at yardwork. Can't figure out how to get the food from cylindrical metal thing our Salvadoran housekeeper calls "can." Madly beating it against floor. No use. Will return later once I've stopped bleeding. So very hungry.

20:30: Occasional suspicious-looking yuppies wander past the house. I suspect they are desperately searching for food because the area's upscale restaurants are shut down. Must keep an eye on them. Painfully hungry now but don't dare go outside.

21:43: Without Maria to dust and vacuum, the air inside is dangerously unhealthy. Don't know how much longer I can hold out.

Thankfully, I lost consciousness shortly after this entry. I awoke to find that order had been restored. The illegals had returned, thank God. I cried the bittersweet tears of one who had been to the abyss and back.

No longer will I doubt that the health of our society depends on the unrestricted flow of the innumerable castoffs of a certain third-rate nation we have the good fortune to share a border with. Viva Mexico! ■

Dennis Dale's blog, *Untethered*, can be found at www.dennisdale.blogspot.com

Iran: Gulf War III?

Attacking the Islamic Republic would mean steep costs and uncertain victory.

By Charles V. Peña

IF GAS BREAKING the \$3/gallon barrier could dominate the evening news and send Congress into a frenzy, imagine Americans' horror if oil, now \$75/barrel, suddenly tops \$200. Neither our political will nor our wallets are prepared, but a few stalled SUVs may be the least of our concerns if the U.S. makes good on its threats against Iran.

On April 10, President Bush drew his line in the sand: "We do not want the Iranians to have a nuclear weapon, the capacity to make a nuclear weapon or the knowledge about how to make a nuclear weapon." The next day, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad declared that his country had "joined countries with nuclear technology" by successfully enriching uranium. Now Iran maintains that its nuclear ambitions are peaceful, but many analysts believe the real purpose is to build nuclear weapons—which the White House says it will not allow.

President Bush insists that he wants to resolve the situation diplomatically, but his recent pronouncements sound eerily like the run-up to the Iraq War, and his ultimatums have significantly narrowed the range of options. According to *New Yorker* columnist Seymour Hersh, "The Bush Administration, while publicly advocating diplomacy in order to stop Iran from pursuing a nuclear weapon, has increased clandestine activities inside Iran and intensified planning for a possible major air attack."

The blueprint for a pre-emptive strike against Iran's nuclear program is based on Israel's strike against Iraq's Osirak nuclear reactor in June 1981. But this

would not be Osirak redux. Unlike Osirak, attacking Iran's nuclear program would require striking multiple targets. The three main targets would likely be Bushehr, which is a complex of light-water reactors where spent fuel rods could be diverted to produce plutonium for nuclear weapons; the previously secret Natanz nuclear facility, believed to be used for uranium enrichment that could be used for nuclear weapons; and Arak, which is the site of two planned heavy-water reactors that could produce plutonium for nuclear weapons. But a decapitating strike against Iran's nuclear program would involve more than just three targets. According to GlobalSecurity.org, "there are perhaps two dozen suspected nuclear facilities in Iran."

In a war game run for *The Atlantic* in the fall of 2004, retired Air Force Col. Sam Gardiner identified 14 locations for Iran's nuclear-related facilities but developed a pre-emptive strike target list of 125 nuclear, chemical, and biological facilities with approximately 300 aim points—20 of which would require penetrating weapons or bunker busters. The main cause of all the additional aim points is the need to suppress Iran's air defenses, including advanced Russian S-300 and S-400 surface-to-air missiles.

In addition to more aim points that must be attacked, Iran's air capabilities mean that a successful strike would require several days to degrade air defenses sufficiently before the primary targets could be hit. (It is important to remember that one of the reasons U.S. air power was so successful at the outset of Operation Iraqi Freedom and

could operate with relative impunity was that Iraq's air defenses had been rendered virtually ineffective by 10 years of no-fly-zone enforcement.)

Certainly the United States military is capable of conducting a complex large-scale air strike against Iran using aircraft armed with precision weapons or cruise missiles. Assuming all the weapons hit their intended targets, the success of such a military operation would rest on three factors:

- All known targets comprise the full extent of Iran's nuclear program and there are no secret facilities
- Minimal collateral damage
- No retaliation by the regime in Tehran

Recalling pre-Iraq War predictions about the United States being hailed as a liberator while Iraqis embraced democracy, how likely is this outcome? The odds aren't good.

A covert reactor would be a difficult undertaking for the Iranians but cannot be ruled out. A secret uranium-enrichment facility is a more likely possibility. After all, it was two years before the Natanz facility was revealed and then only because it was disclosed by the National Council of the Resistance of Iran, not because it was discovered by U.S. intelligence. We also know that many of Iran's nuclear facilities, like the Tehran research reactor, are located in urban areas, so civilian casualties are almost a certainty. If the U.S. resorts to tactical nuclear weapons, as Hersh suggests it might—and President Bush has said that option has not been taken off

the table—a Defense Department-sponsored report by the National Academy of Sciences stated that they could “kill up to a million people or more if used in heavily populated areas.” Finally, it is hard to imagine that any government would sit idly by after being bombed on a relatively massive scale: 300 aim points would require at least two weapons each for reliability and to assure a high probability of kill.

If Iran’s ballistic missile sites were not taken out in the initial strike, Tehran would have some 500 Shehab ballistic missiles at its disposal for retaliation. The shorter-range Shehab-1 and -2 missiles, variants of the Russian Scud missile, are capable of reaching U.S. targets in the Gulf, including Iraq, where some 130,000 American soldiers are currently stationed. The longer range Shehab-3 missile, based on the North Korean Nodong missile, could reach Israel—and Iran has made clear that this will be an early target: “We have announced that wherever America does something evil, the first place that we target will be Israel,” Revolutionary Guards Commander Mohammad-Ebrahim Dehqani said last week. Like the V-2 missiles used by Germany against Britain during World War II, the Shehab missiles would be most effective against civilian populations rather than military targets due to their relative inaccuracy. How well U.S. forces in the Gulf region and the Israelis could withstand an onslaught of Iranian Shehab missiles would depend on the effectiveness of U.S. Patriot and Israeli Arrow missile-defense systems. To date, the Patriot has not lived up to its expectations against Iraqi Scud missiles. On paper, the Arrow has better performance than Patriot PAC-3—greater speed and higher altitude—but it has not proved itself in combat. Moreover, relying on missile-defense systems to blunt Iranian retaliation fails to account for the possibility that Iran’s Shehab missiles could be armed with chemical warheads.

Iran could also retaliate by sowing further chaos in already unstable Iraq. In a February 2006 threat assessment presented to the Senate Select Committee On Intelligence, National Intelligence Director John Negroponte stated, “Iran provides guidance and training to select Iraqi Shia political groups and weapons and training to Shia militant groups to enable anti-Coalition attacks. Tehran has been responsible for at least some of the increasing lethality of anti-Coalition attacks by providing Shia militants with the capability to build IEDs [improvised explosive devices] with explosively formed projectiles.” But we have yet to feel their full fury. He added, “Tehran’s intentions to inflict pain on the United States in Iraq have been constrained by its caution to avoid giving Washington an excuse to attack it.” If the United States attacked Iran, Tehran is prepared to step up its activities in Iraq, including covertly deploying elements of its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

And Iranian retaliation need not be limited to military action. Iranian oil production is fourth in the world and second to Saudi Arabia in the Gulf—nearly 4 million barrels a day. (Iran’s oil reserves are third largest in the world after Saudi Arabia and Canada.) While withholding oil from the market to inflict economic damage on the United States would not be economically rational since the Iranians would lose their main source of revenue, it cannot be ruled out. The Iranians could also disrupt the global oil supply from the Persian Gulf either by mining the Straits of Hormuz or sinking tankers to block the straits, which can only be transited via two one-mile-wide channels. According to the Department of Energy, roughly 20 percent of the world’s oil passes through the Straits of Hormuz and closure “would require use of longer alternate routes (if available) at increased transportation costs.” If Iranians shut down

the straits, the price of oil will skyrocket—with shock waves felt throughout the global economy.

More chilling is the possibility that the Iranians would feel unrestrained about resorting to terrorism—their best bet against America’s military might. According to recent State Department *Country Reports on Terrorism*, “Iran remained the most active state sponsor of terrorism” by providing support to Hezbollah and Palestinian terrorist groups such as Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command. Hezbollah was responsible for the 1983 bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut that killed 241 people and the 1996 bombing of the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia that killed 19 U.S. soldiers, but it has not targeted Americans subsequently. The al-Qaeda terror threat is already grave—and would be much worse if now constrained Hezbollah were unleashed. Former CIA Director George Tenet called Hezbollah “an organization with capability and worldwide presence ... [al-Qaeda’s] equal, if not a far more capable organization.” And former Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage said, “Hezbollah may be the ‘A-team’ of terrorists and maybe al-Qaeda’s actually the B-team.” Set aside which is more lethal and consider a scenario where the two organizations overcome Sunni-Shi’ite divisions to form a tactical alliance against a common enemy: the United States.

Beyond direct retaliation, there are also the ripple effects of unintended consequences—and there are always unintended consequences. After Afghanistan and Iraq, attacking Iran would likely be viewed by many in the Muslim world as confirmation that the U.S. is waging a war against Islam, a tipping point that would incline many to sympathize and side with the radicals. Not only would we earn the hostility of youthful Iranian

reformers in whom the U.S. has previously put faith, but we could ignite destabilizing violence in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, and Indonesia. Add precarious Afghanistan and nuclear-armed Pakistan, governments we can ill afford to unsettle, and we stand to accomplish exactly what bin Laden wants but is unable to achieve on his own.

The ripples could reach far beyond Muslim countries. Our European allies host large immigrant Muslim populations—over 4 million in France, over 3 million in Germany, and over 1 million in the United Kingdom—that are susceptible to radicalization, as demonstrated by the July 2005 terrorist attacks on the London tube system. A U.S. attack on Iran could unleash a wave of terrorist reprisal throughout Europe.

Another consideration is how Muslims in the Balkans might react. With few exceptions, almost all al-Qaeda and radical Islamic terrorists have been of Arab origin. Thus the tendency has been to equate “Muslim” with “Arab” in creating a profile of potential al-Qaeda terrorists. But Muslims from the Balkans are anything but Arab, and if al-Qaeda could successfully recruit Muslims from the local Balkan population, the war on terrorism would be thrown a dangerous curveball.

There is also the risk of radicalizing America’s Muslim population. While the vast majority do not support bin Laden’s terrorism, they are not unsympathetic to his arguments about U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East and Muslim world—particularly U.S. support for oppressive and autocratic governments in the countries they left behind. Bin Laden has tapped some core issues that many Muslims can agree with him about in principle, even if they do not condone the killing of innocents. But if American Muslims begin to believe that the United States has embarked on a war against Islam and their home countries, even if they consider America to be their home,

how long can they be expected not to defend their religious and cultural roots?

Ultimately, it is impossible to predict the outcome of a U.S. attack against Iran’s nuclear program. None of the above scenarios—and they are not exhaustive—are mutually exclusive. Russia and China, powerful states with heavy financial investments in Iran, have consistently registered their opposition to a military solution regarding Iran; indeed they oppose Washington’s push for economic sanctions. A U.S. military strike against Iran would engage their interests in ways difficult to calculate. The ominous analogy pointed to by Washington commentator Steve Clemons deserves sober consideration: “This mess is looking increasingly like 1914—when nations fell into war because of ego, attitude, poorly thought strategies regarding basic strategic interests, and miscalculation.”

It is precisely because of this unpredictability that all of the outcomes must be carefully weighed. However big the potential payoff, the risks must be assessed, for Iran is not sanction-battered, diplomatically isolated Iraq, and the United States can ill afford another Operation Wishful Thinking.

One of the fundamental problems in war-gaming is the tendency to view the game as chess, where moves can be anticipated and so-called branch-and-block strategies employed to thwart the various combinations of moves by the enemy. But chess is the wrong analogy. As Iraq has clearly demonstrated, a kaleidoscope metaphor is more appropriate—moving one piece results in all the other pieces shifting into a new pattern that sets in motion a series of uncontrollable events.

Why, then, would the Bush administration be willing to roll the dice with military action against Iran? The answer lies in the new National Security Strategy issued on March 16:

As important as are these nuclear issues, the United States has broader concerns regarding Iran. The Iranian regime sponsors terrorism; threatens Israel; seeks to thwart Middle East peace; disrupts democracy in Iraq; and denies the aspirations of its people for freedom. The nuclear issue and our other concerns can ultimately be resolved only if the Iranian regime makes the strategic decision to change these policies, open up its political system, and afford freedom to its people. This is the ultimate goal of U.S. policy.

This gives the game away: administration strategists understand that if the United States bombs Iran’s nuclear facilities, the Iranians will likely retaliate using terrorism against American targets, which would then become justification to invade Iran for regime change. But far from spurring the democratic transition of the Bush administration’s fantasies, this will galvanize the Islamic world against us—in addition to rocking the global economy, endangering our allies, and costing untold Iranian and American lives. The alternative—if diplomatic efforts prove unsuccessful—might be a price worth paying. Although the Iranians may eventually acquire a few nuclear weapons, they will not be able to ignore the reality of vastly superior American and Israeli arsenals. Deterrence could then begin its work, as it did with the Soviet Union and China once and with North Korea now. ■

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Life Lessons

The Caseys and the Clintons team up to win back abortion-ambivalent voters

By W. James Antle III

IT TAKES A CERTAIN KIND of fortitude to be a pro-life politician in today's Democratic Party. After all, the number of elected pro-life Democrats has declined steadily since the late 1970s. Those who remain are tolerated by their pro-choice colleagues as long as they keep a low profile and stick to their safe congressional seats; the most ambitious among them usually end up becoming pro-choice. But as Democrats seek to soften their image on abortion, all this may be changing.

Consider Pennsylvania. In 1992, the late Gov. Robert Casey became a symbol of his party's intolerance of pro-lifers when he was denied a chance to address the Democratic National Convention about the injustice of abortion. A decade later, his son Bob Casey Jr. lost the Democratic gubernatorial nomination. The National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League (NARAL) spent \$574,000 to defeat him and worked to register 13,000 pro-choice Republicans to vote for his primary opponent. In 2000, Sen. Rick Santorum (R-Pa.) was re-elected, while Al Gore was carrying the state over George W. Bush, largely because his pro-life Democratic opponent received inadequate support from the party's pro-choice donor base.

This year, Santorum's seat is widely considered the Democrats' best pickup opportunity—with Bob Casey Jr. as the nominee. Casey was recruited to run by the pro-choice chairman of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.). Schumer and Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell, the pro-choice Democrat who bested Casey

in the contentious 2002 gubernatorial race, worked to clear the primary field of credible pro-choice challengers (two minor candidates are still challenging Casey, mainly on the abortion issue). When former NARAL head Kate Michelman flirted briefly with challenging Casey as an independent, few Pennsylvanians rushed to her aid.

Why did pro-choice liberals embrace a candidate who opposes abortion even in cases of rape and incest? Because polls show he is likely to win. After 2004, the Democrats began to doubt their own press releases about America's incontrovertible pro-choice majority. President Bush carried single-issue abortion voters by a comfortable margin and was the first Republican presidential nominee to win the Catholic vote since 1988. Abortion appeared to help Republicans in other races as well, with pro-lifers enjoying a net gain of three Senate seats.

"Abortion helped cost the Democrats that election," says Mark Stricherz, a journalist who has written extensively about the flight of Catholics and working-class cultural conservatives from the Democratic Party. "It has cost them in every presidential election since 1984, even when they have won."

The party's 2004 presidential nominee has conceded as much. Speaking to a liberal audience a few weeks after the election, *Newsweek* reported that Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.) "told the group they needed new ways to make people understand they didn't like abortion." After examining the election results and exit-poll data, many Democratic strategists agreed.

The key, many of them believed, was to win back "abortion-ambivalent" voters—people who don't fit comfortably in either the pro-life or pro-choice camps, who have moral qualms about abortion but believe it should be legal under certain limited circumstances. Bill Clinton spoke to these voters with his mantra that abortion should be "safe, legal, and rare," but Democrats lost them during the 1990s by opposing parental-notification laws and supporting legal partial-birth abortion.

A rough consensus on the new strategy seems to have emerged: the party needs to be willing to run pro-life candidates—at least in races where they are the candidates with the best chance of winning—and there must be an effort by pro-choice Democrats to distinguish their views from the unpopular position that abortion is a positive good. And, somewhat less in the big-tent spirit, they need to find wedge issues to divide pro-lifers in the same way that partial-birth abortion divided pro-choicers.

An example of this last tactic can be found in the partnership between Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) and Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-N.Y.). Reid is pro-life and Clinton has followed her husband's example by giving speeches seeking "common ground" on abortion. In April, they co-authored an op-ed endorsing the Prevention First Act, a bill that seeks to reduce unintended pregnancies and abortions by expanding access to contraception, increasing funding for women's health programs and sex education—but not imposing any legal restrictions on abortion.

Reid and Clinton advertised themselves as “two senators on opposite sides of the abortion debate” searching for “common-ground, common-sense policies”—policies they knew many conservatives would oppose. Common ground between pro-life and pro-choice Democrats needn’t include pro-life Republicans.

Conservatives might find it a little hard to take being lectured by these two senators about the abortion rate. Reid is a weak pro-lifer who voted against both John Roberts and Samuel Alito for the Supreme Court; when he was the number-two Democrat, he often whipped pro-choice. Hillary Clinton opposes virtually all abortion restrictions and supports taxpayer funding. The January 2005 speech in which she claimed to “respect” pro-lifers also not too subtly compared them to Nicolae Ceausescu’s Romanian Communist regime.

But there is no denying they have identified some issues that divide abortion foes. Fiscal conservatives won’t support the Prevention First Act’s spending increases; social conservatives aren’t fond of government sex-education programs. The pro-life movement depends on the support of traditionalist Catholics and others who disapprove of contraception. Objections that these initiatives won’t be the best way to reduce abortions—and concerns about sex education and birth control being supplied by Planned Parenthood, the nation’s largest abortion provider—make pro-life opposition even more likely.

While contraception has been raised as a wedge issue in the abortion debate before, there are reasons to believe that it has become more salient in recent years. Many states have been debating increased access to the “morning-after pill,” particularly for rape victims. Pro-life groups have often opposed this legislation because the pill can act as an abortifacient.

Colorado Gov. Bill Owens vetoed an emergency-contraception bill on the grounds that it would impinge on the religious freedom of Catholic health-care providers. Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney used his veto of a similar bill as the occasion to announce his conversion from pro-choice to pro-life. But to many moderates, opposing emergency contraception may seem as extreme as the Democrats’ refusal to ban partial-birth abortion.

Pro-life and pro-choice Democrats have joined forces against the Republicans on other fronts. In late February, 55 Catholic Democrats in the House of Representatives signed a statement of principles that affirmed their “commitment to the dignity of life” and support for “increasing access to education for all,” “pressing for real health care reform,” “taking seriously the decision to go to war,” and “reducing poverty.” The signers professed to “agree with the Catholic Church” about “the undesirability of abortion.”

The statement was spearheaded by Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.), who has a 100 percent rating from NARAL. While there were many pro-life signatories, a fair number had never voted for a single abortion restriction. But a pro-choice position appears less damning in a statement of principles that assigns opposition to abortion roughly the same priority as support for antipoverty spending and health-care reform.

It may not be enough to persuade pro-life voters to change their allegiances. In 2004, DeLauro helped devise a Catholic Voting Scorecard that weighed votes against partial-birth abortion against support for a higher minimum wage. Pro-life liberals scored the highest—Congressmen Dale Kildee (D-Mich.) and Tim Ryan (D-Ohio) were among those receiving 100 percent—but even pro-choice House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) managed 63.6

percent. The scorecard didn’t appear to budge the Catholic vote.

Democrats for Life of America (DFLA) has also devised a plan called the 95-10 Initiative that seeks to reduce the abortion rate by 95 percent in ten years. Sponsored by Congressman Ryan, it contains parental-notification and pro-life informed-consent provisions, but most of the proposals could be supported by pro-choice politicians. DFLA is also calling for making the adoption tax credit permanent, increasing funding for domestic violence prevention, and additional spending on federal nutritional programs.

“It’s a serious program,” Stricherz says of the DFLA initiative, though he argues it doesn’t go far enough. “Ultimately, some kind of legal restrictions on abortion are necessary.” But Stricherz is also willing to criticize pro-life Republicans, noting that few of them have promoted taxpayer-funded ultrasound machines for crisis pregnancy centers.

“I know conservatives don’t like to have their taxes raised,” he says. “But what kind of society do we want to live in? One where we keep the most money or one where we protect the vulnerable?”

Democrats don’t just want to separate abortion-ambivalent voters from pro-lifers; they hope to divide pro-life liberals and pro-life conservatives. This has caused some conservatives to argue that pro-life Democrats aren’t changing their party so much as being used by it. Ramesh Ponnuru, for example, contended in his recently released *The Party of Death*, “The real change may be that now pro-life Democrats are complicit in their own marginalization.”

Not all pro-lifers who have remained Democrats agree. “Pro-life Democrats need to take over the party machinery, just like McGovern did,” suggests Stricherz. A pro-life friend in Pennsylvania agrees, saying he just might vote for Casey this time—after he figures out where the Democrat stands on judges. ■

Think Liberty, Act Locally

Wilhelm Röpke integrated libertarian economics and traditional values.

By John Zmirak

I REMEMBER THE 1980S as the good old days. Reagan was in the White House, Van Halen was on the radio, and I lived in a Gothic dorm. We still expected Pope John Paul II to roll back both Communism and the worst effects of Vatican II, while the Muslims were fighting on our side. (One issue of the *Yale Free Press* featured Charles Bork, son of Judge Robert, posing with Afghan freedom fighters, all of whom looked like Osama bin Laden. So did Charles.) Best of all, the conservative movement was still a lively intellectual rugby match, played vigorously but by rules. These were the principles that every faction shared, and it was over them that we divided.

The great split on the Right back then was not over which godforsaken Third World hellhole to invade and annex but between traditionalists and libertarians. If the goal of American conservatives is to preserve the “ordered liberty” bequeathed to us by our Founders, the members of these two factions were distinguished by which word they pronounced with greater emphasis, “ordered” or “liberty.” *National Review* was still dominated by Frank Meyer’s “fusionism,” which asserted that the Christian vision of man demanded such liberty, to the greatest degree compatible with the common good, narrowly defined. This compromise position was meant to yoke together both poles of the movement, but lightning still flashed between them—as I learned through long, gin-tinted disputations in the Party of the Right, sometimes against one or both of Meyer’s libertarian sons. For a vivid picture of this great debate, explored by some of the most informed

essayists on the Right from Russell Kirk to Murray Rothbard, see the new *American Conservatism: An Encyclopedia*, to which I am one of the less distinguished contributors.

I hope it’s not simple nostalgia, as my 20th reunion comes along, that makes me think these are the issues we should still be arguing about. What is the maximum liberty the state can guarantee an individual to trade, buy, sell, marry, procreate, recreate, and immigrate without undermining the social order that protects those liberties—and creating first chaos, then tyranny? Once we agree on rejecting hard totalitarianism of the nationalist or socialist ilk and the soft version found in the European nanny-state, what are the limits beyond which society cannot safely permit individuals to go? The views of principled libertarians and anarcho-capitalists such as one meets at the Ludwig von Mises Institute can be characterized in an old, wise saying: your right to swing your arm ends at my face. For these thinkers, individual rights are the one and only measure of the common good. It is here that traditionalists begin to raise objections.

The arguments of libertarians are easy to dismiss—if you’re intellectually lazy or eager to curry favor with either of two political parties that wring votes from distracted citizens by promises of tax money wrung from “the rich” and warnings of innumerable threatening foreigners. But for those who take seriously our founding principles, the libertarian challenge must be addressed—not just once, but every time we consider employing the power of the state. In fact, the first question for any American conservative

faced with suggested legislation was once—and always ought to be—“Do we really need the government to do this?” We ought to treat this as the last resort—like calling the cops.

Equally important is the next question: “Can we leave this to the local or state government?” We should always try to coerce our fellow citizen as little as possible and take as little as possible of his wealth. After that, we ought to keep the government as accountable as possible. A local city councilman is far more answerable to his constituents than some appointed federal bureaucrat empowered by thousands of pages of legislation which hundreds of congressmen have voted for without reading. Our Founders wrote this truth into the Constitution’s 10th Amendment. (Thanks to activist judges, law students now joke that on exams “The 10th Amendment is always the wrong answer. Nothing is based on it now.”)

Nearly every tragic event of the 20th century, apart from earthquakes, can be traced to the failure of politicians and voters to take these two questions seriously and test each proposed expansion of government power against these principles of liberty and localism.

Perhaps the most intellectually important exponent of both was Wilhelm Röpke. This economist was one of the first German professors to denounce, and be exiled by, the Nazis; he’d used his academic salary to produce and hand out anti-Nazi pamphlets at the polls in 1928. Röpke’s wartime books, written in Switzerland and smuggled into Germany, laid the groundwork for the Christian Democratic movement. Röpke was

the economist most responsible for that country's postwar economic "miracle." He led the campaign that convinced Ludwig Erhard to eliminate wage and price controls in 1948, even as he introduced the Deutschmark. The explosion of market activity that resulted quickly made Germans richer than the victorious English—who went on using ration coupons into the 1950s. (Recall that Orwell based his vision of grinding poverty in 1984 on the conditions in England in 1948.)

Born in Schwarmstedt, Germany in 1899, Röpke served in World War I, where he won the Iron Cross. In the trenches, Röpke grew disgusted with militarist nationalism and briefly flirted with socialism as an alternative. Then Röpke encountered several essays of Ludwig von Mises, which he said "rendered me immune, at a very early date, against the virus of socialism." In his 1920 "Economic Calculation in the Socialist Commonwealth," Mises debunked the notion that a centrally planned socialist economy was more efficient than the apparent chaos of a market economy. As Mises demonstrated, the innumerable desires of millions of consumers could never be determined, much less met, through any imaginable bureaucracy. Governments like the then celebrated Bolsheviks' that pretend to do so can only fake success by dictating what people should want, then providing it—that is, by turning citizens into slaves.

By contrast, in a market economy, a consumer can signal a farmer in Guatemala to produce more coffee, a factory worker in Seattle to roast it darker, and a college student in Queens to leave room for milk by sliding a \$5 bill across a counter. No need for coercion at any point. Indeed, the very fact that socialist economies continued to use currency was a concession of this central, free-market point—that the only way market signals could ever be

conveyed to producers was through the price system. However its signals may be distorted by regulations, tariffs, or taxes, this infinitely supple and exquisitely sensitive system of communication acts as both the nerve system and the brain of a modern economy. Socialists may drug or bludgeon it, but they cannot hope to replace it—any more than a government computer network could replicate eBay. The utopia dreamt of by socialists cannot be found on earth but only in the DVD of "The Matrix."

Röpke extended Mises's insight to the whole of society, arguing that the rest of human life, beyond economic activity, was equally impossible to plan and impervious to social engineering. No human society worthy of the name could presume to corral and herd its citizens like chattel, and those that tried would fail—spectacularly, as in Pol Pot's attempt to recreate a rural utopia, or in dribs and drabs, as in the American war on poverty. Back in the 1980s, neoconservatives used to devote themselves to chronicling the futility of such grand attempts to "engineer the human soul" (Stalin's phrase), and they did a terrific job at it. As Francis Fukuyama has recently suggested, I wish they'd reread their old (or their fathers') essays.

But Röpke went further than the libertarians, in a direction that would eventually mark him as a conservative, in continuity with Edmund Burke, Russell Kirk, and the tradition of Catholic social teaching begun by Leo XIII. Given that the logic of a market economy and a free society of responsible adults is so compelling, Röpke wondered how so many educated Westerners could get it wrong. How could Germans who had rejected the mild autocracy of the Kaiser embrace a totalitarian state run as a racial breeding farm? Why would Englishmen who scorned fox hunting defend the torture chambers of the NKVD?

The answers Röpke found he detailed in a series of studies extending far beyond economics into political philosophy, literature, and religious and social history. *The Social Crisis of Our Time* (1941), *The Moral Foundations of Civil Society* (1944), and *A Humane Economy* (1960) are essential reading for any intellectual conservative. In those books, Röpke demonstrates how the social changes wrought by the industrial revolution rendered life almost intolerable for millions—and made them desperate for a remedy. Western man was profoundly traumatized by the movement from life on the land, in a context of strong religious faith and tight family bonds, to urban concentration and unskilled factory labor that often included women and children. And he has not yet recovered himself, we might add, as we see from the plummeting birth rates and fractured families in every industrialized country.

Central to the dispossession masses of men experienced, Röpke argued, was their loss of economic self-sufficiency. While it might have been necessary to support much larger modern populations for small farms to give way to large, artisans to trade workshops for factories, and small stores to lose business to enormous chain stores, Röpke points to the profound social costs of these changes.

Echoing the arguments of Hilaire Belloc and G.K. Chesterton, Röpke asks repeatedly throughout his books whether responsible citizens of a free society can grow up in conditions where they are economically dependent, enfolded in the hives of a modern factory or corporation, subject for their very survival on decisions made by strangers and conveyed to them through factory loudspeakers or interdepartmental memos. As Röpke points out, the liberties treasured in Western societies were not won under such conditions but were fought

for by Swiss cattleherds, British shopkeepers, American planters—men whose economic fates laid in their own hands, who had learned independence and self-reliance by supporting themselves and their families. What workers and functionaries learn in the school of modern, centralized economic production is a very different lesson. And it is not one conducive to liberty.

Röpke argues that social and economic freedom is essential but not self-sufficient. What Europeans accurately call “liberal society” is the most efficient and appropriate means for allowing people to live well and generate wealth—this much had been proved by thinkers from Adam Smith to Friedrich Hayek and ratified by the founders of free societies. All men have an inborn

bors as animals or machines—amenable to coercion in the name of a higher good. Or they will insist on privileges for themselves that impair the rights of the helpless, such as the unborn. Such “liberties” are essentially toxic, free radicals that once released destroy the very sinews of our society, rendering us unworthy of (and unsuited to) our free Constitution.

Behaving without a sense of ultimate responsibility—as most of us who are not philosophers will do in the absence of religion—breeds social problems that cry out for remedy by the state. Just think of the vast expansion of government agencies created to replicate the functions of a crumbling American family—from daycare centers to nursing homes. The state will answer, and its power will grow. As it does, we will cede

corporate welfare, which hobble the independence and distort the initiatives of the free business sector. They must also refuse the cheap labor offered by illegal immigrants who enjoy neither the rights nor responsibilities of citizens.

With Röpke, we should reject the Social Darwinism that some pretend is essential to the market economy. As those know who have read more of Adam Smith than *The Wealth of Nations*—his companion work *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, for instance—an unfettered economy depends for its operation on the integrity, benevolence, and honesty of its participants. In the absence of these virtues, what arises is a society like post-Communist Russia, where corruption and crime generate enormous waste and long-term investments are often impossible in the absence of fundamental trust.

And we as consumers and citizens have a role to play—beyond working and trading honestly, as if our freedom depended on it. Every time we choose to patronize a family-owned shop over a chain store, to take the extra time and expense to buy produce from a local farmer rather than some distant Chinese agribusiness, we are helping a fellow American preserve his economic independence. We are helping to produce the kind of fellow-citizen with whom we want to live. There’s no need for the government to impose this choice on us by regulation or tariff. The rise of the organic-food industry (projected to reach \$32.3 billion in revenues by 2009), the march of home-schooling through American homes, and the whole tradition of American private-sector activism prove that we need not turn to the state to preserve vital social goods. We can vote for freedom with our checkbooks. ■

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BEHAVING WITHOUT A **SENSE OF ULTIMATE RESPONSIBILITY**—AS MOST OF US WHO ARE NOT PHILOSOPHERS WILL DO IN THE **ABSENCE OF RELIGION**— **BREEDS SOCIAL PROBLEMS** THAT CRY OUT FOR **REMEDY BY THE STATE**.

longing for freedom—if not necessarily a willingness to grant it to others—and certain rights that come from God and can be known by the use of reason. But a free society is not the natural condition of man. It is not the absence of tyranny. Instead, it is the fruit of centuries of struggle and care, more like an olive tree than a sunflower, and in practice proves rather fragile. It depends on what economists have learned to call “social capital,” an inheritance of civic benevolence accumulated over centuries, which can be exhausted much more quickly.

The key contributor to social capital is a religious faith that asserts the dignity and sacredness of the individual and the autonomy of church and state. With the decline of such faith, men are more prone to see themselves and their neigh-

to it ever more responsibility for determining our lives, and the cycle will feed on itself—until we are at last a band of spoiled 20-something Frenchmen rioting against the reality principle.

If society is to resist the temptations of politicians who promise to remedy poverty and injustice through centralized coercion, it must have institutions that address these problems—from extended families and churches to private charities and vibrant local governments. Individuals must adopt and live up to high standards of personal accountability, practicing what our Founders called “republican virtue.” Supporters of market freedom must, Röpke insists, stand among the harshest critics of corruption, not wink at it as so many pro-business Republicans do. They must spurn the blandishments of

Broken China Policy

The incoherence of conengagement

By Justin Logan

THE MOST NOTABLE aspect of the recent White House meeting between Chinese president Hu Jintao and President Bush may have been the pre-summit wrangling over whether the deal would include a state dinner. In the end, the sides seemed to agree to disagree, with China characterizing the meeting as a “state visit” but the Bush administration calling it an “official visit,” offering lunch instead of a formal, black-tie dinner.

In a broader sense, U.S. policy toward China suffers from a similar incoherence. But what many Americans don’t know is that one of its key architects was Zalmay Khalilzad, currently our man in Baghdad.

Khalilzad has had an interesting career. In addition to his work in Iraq, he took the helm as the first post-Taliban U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan, having served previous stints in government as well as having held academic posts at Columbia, UC San Diego, and at the RAND Corporation. His work at RAND may end up being more important to the future of America than any contribution Khalilzad is able to make in either Iraq or Afghanistan.

After the Cold War ended, defense wonks in Washington scrambled to find a new overarching foreign and security policy. One of the possibilities that emerged in the debates of the 1990s was the prospect that a rising China would in the future mount a threat similar to the one the Soviet Union had posed in the recent past. The China Threat debates reached a fever pitch in the mid-’90s, with the publication of several alarmist tracts,

including Richard Bernstein and Ross H. Munro’s *The Coming Conflict with China*.

In 1997, the Center for Security Policy declared, “The nature of the threat posed by China is in key ways of a greater magnitude ... than that mounted by the Soviet Union at the height of the Cold War.” Congressional staffer and China expert William Triplett argued that Chinese missile tests in 1995 made clear that “the Chinese Communists have abandoned their responsible position in the international community and they just want to be feared in the same way the Nazis were in the 1930s.”

Alongside the debates inside the Beltway, the 1992 presidential election brought the China issue new prominence nationally. While on the campaign trail, Bill Clinton lambasted the first Bush administration’s China policy, accusing Bush of “appeasing the butchers of Beijing.” Once Clinton got into office, however, he found it much more difficult to confront the Chinese. The confluence of rapidly expanding economic ties and the idea that the United States could help to “shape China’s rise” led Clinton to soften his position, eventually pushing for—and getting—Most Favored Nation status for China approved in 1997 and also advocating that the “butchers” be admitted to the World Trade Organization. On the security side, Clinton went so far as to authorize the transfer of high-level satellite technology to China.

All this time, Khalilzad and his colleagues at RAND were wrestling with the China issue themselves. Khalilzad had

cut his teeth as a hardliner on the Soviet threat during the 1970s and 1980s, so he came to the problem of China without any delicate feelings about the use of American power. In 1999, a RAND team under Khalilzad’s leadership published a manuscript titled “The United States and a Rising China: Strategic and Military Implications.” Khalilzad drew on that manuscript to draft a shorter paper, titled “Congage China,” which argued for a policy of part containment, part engagement. In the paper, Khalilzad set out the contours of what America would eventually—and somewhat inadvertently—embrace as its overall China policy. Congagement, for all intents and purposes, is our China policy today.

Khalilzad argued that both traditional strategies—engagement and containment—had shortcomings that made them undesirable with respect to China. On the one hand, engagement left open the possibility that alongside its growing economic power, China would begin to act commensurately in the political and, more importantly, military arenas. Under such a scenario, China could end up challenging the United States militarily. Engagement rested on the assumption that the ongoing relationship with China would change Chinese behavior in a favorable direction. But Khalilzad identified the inherent danger: “if the assumption is incorrect, engagement will merely help China become a more threatening adversary in the future.”

On the other hand, Khalilzad was uncomfortable with containment. Such a policy, in his view, was detrimental to

the United States economically, as well as premature. China was not seeking to challenge U.S. dominance at the time, so embarking on a containment policy would be rash. But then, what to do?

Dodge the hard choices entirely, of course. Congagement would allegedly achieve three objectives: “preserve the hope inherent in engagement policy while deterring China from becoming hostile and hedging against the possibility that a strong China might challenge U.S. interests.” A crude, shorthand version of this policy could be summed up as “military containment, economic and political engagement.”

But as deft as Khalilzad was in picking at the deficiencies of both engagement and containment, he failed to identify the gross shortcomings of congagement. Acknowledging that his strategy was agnostic on essential questions regarding China’s future—such as whether China would make its peace with American global hegemony—Khalilzad borrowed the shaky assumptions of engagement, leading to a policy that was, and is, at best incoherent.

Khalilzad found engagement unsatisfying because we could not be certain that our exchanges with the Chinese would moderate their behavior. But in reality, engagement rested on not one, but two, related assumptions: 1) that economic growth would lead to political liberalization in China, and 2) that political liberalization—eventually in the direction of democracy—would moderate China’s behavior internationally. Both assumptions, which congagement does not effectively address, fail to withstand scrutiny.

Take, first, the question of whether economic growth leads to domestic political reform. This theory, best articulated by the sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset, argued that economic growth would lead to the growth of a middle class, which would in turn demand political reforms and rights. However, recent

research by political scientists Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and George W. Downs has indicated that authoritarian regimes can sustain both themselves and significant economic growth by focusing on controlling so-called “coordination goods,” or public goods that allow demands for political reform to bubble upward, such as freedom of association, assembly, and speech. Writing in the September/October 2005 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, Mesquita and Downs described the implications of their work:

the suppression of coordination goods is an effective survival strategy [for authoritarian governments] ... significant economic growth can be attained and sustained even while the government suppresses coordination goods. ... [T]here is growing evidence that at least in the short term economic growth stabilizes regimes rather than undermines them. China, therefore, is best viewed not as the exception to the rule that growth produces liberalization, but as emblematic of the fact that it usually does not.

Banking on political transformation as a result of economic growth seems to be an increasingly risky bet. But what if Mesquita and Downs are wrong and Lipset remains correct? What if China does transform in a democratic direction? The emergence of a more democratic China would then feed into the second assumption: a more democratic China should make its peace with American predominance in East Asia.

But even if China did become democratic, would China really resign itself to perennally playing second fiddle not just globally but even in its own region? There is good reason to doubt this notion as well. First, as Texas A&M professor Christopher Layne points out in his new book, *The Peace of Illusions*, China has its share of regional rivalries. In addition

to the United States, China has prickly relations with powerful countries like Japan, India, and even South Korea. It would be remarkable if a hugely powerful China did not seek to shape its security environment to its own benefit. Moreover, as John Mearsheimer of the University of Chicago has suggested, the United States still clings to the Monroe Doctrine, which dictates that no outside power be allowed to achieve strategic influence in the Western Hemisphere. Why would we expect even a democratic China to act differently?

Writing in his book *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, Mearsheimer concludes:

A wealthy China would not be a status quo power but an aggressive state determined to achieve regional hegemony. This is not because a rich China would have wicked motives, but because the best way for any state to maximize its prospects for survival is to be the hegemon in its region of the world.

In the end, a policy of congagement relies on the same untestable assumptions and succumbs to the same perils as would a policy of engagement. As the engagement aspects of the policy cause China to grow, that growth will—over time—shrink the gap between China’s capabilities and those of the United States. The size of the power imbalance will grow smaller, making it more difficult for the United States to deter or defeat China, should the need arise.

Moreover, the aspects of containment policy that congagement borrows are probably inadequate to maintain enough leverage over China to constrain that country, should it become confrontational. The containment side of the policy consists mostly of developing a loose, latently anti-China alliance that could spring into action if China begins showing signs of expansionism. As things

stand now, however, China's growth appears to be outpacing our attempts to put in place measures to contain it.

The first key alliance is with Japan. The joint U.S.-Japanese security statement of February 2005 acknowledged a peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue as a "common strategic objective" for both countries, resulting in loud bellows of protest from China. Then, the Indian nuclear agreement emerged, with little cover to hide its true purpose: to deepen U.S.-Indian relations in the hope of pulling India more closely into the position of a strategic counterweight against China. Under current American policy, it is becoming clear that we are relying on both Japan and India to come to our aid by preparing to switch to a policy of containment, should China mount a challenge. But both Japan's and India's capabilities and willingness to ally closely with the United States against China remain in doubt.

In looking at Khalilzad's prescription for conengagement, and the contours of recent U.S. policy, it is clear that, whether admitted by name or not, the United States is currently engaged in a policy of conengaging China. But for everything to work out all right in the end, one of three things has to happen:

- China would have to "retain its current emphasis on the importance of good relations with the United States"; or
- "the Chinese leadership could undergo an acculturation process, by which it becomes more willing to abide by general norms of the international system"; or
- there is always "the possibility of a transformation of the polity in the direction of democracy."

Any or all of these things could happen. It may also happen that Iraqi Kurds, Shi'ites, and Sunnis decide spon-

taneously to put aside their differences and work to assemble a coherent, liberal Iraqi government. But it would be exceedingly unwise to formulate Iraq policy on the basis of that assumption. In the same sense, it seems imprudent to make China policy on the basis of similarly shaky assumptions.

There is always the possibility that none of the above will happen and that the United States can resign itself to China taking over the lead role in East Asia at some point in the medium term. Although that seems unthinkable now, if current trends continue, it may become an increasingly likely prospect as time wears on.

AS THE POWER GAP CONTINUES TO SHRINK BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND CHINA OVER THE COMING DECADE, CHINA IS LIKELY TO GROW MORE AMBITIOUS.

With China's economy growing at close to 10 percent annually, and with the Chinese spending billions on increasingly advanced military hardware from Russia, the size of the capabilities gap between the United States and China is shrinking rather quickly. True, a Chinese challenge to the United States on a global scale could not take place any time in the foreseeable future. Rather, China has been focusing almost entirely on building up its capacity to throw its weight around in its own region.

By contrast, the Japanese and Indians are only being slowly pulled into a posture of quasi-containment. Japan's military spending is still only about 1 percent of GDP. Although that figure comes close to China's total military spending, and although Japan spends its defense dollars very efficiently, its constitution is still officially pacifist, and it is unclear that the Japanese are prepared to take on a regional role as a balance against China.

For its part, India is actually building its ties with China, through observership in several regional organizations. India is China's second-largest trading partner (after the United States) and the two nations have recently co-operated to work toward resolution of a lingering border dispute. Overall, the containment aspects of conengagement appear to be coming online much more slowly than China's power is.

A shooting war with China is very unlikely in the next few years. The ongoing economic relationship and the remaining imbalance of power should prevent China from making aggressive moves too soon. But over time, China's

regional ambitions will become more evident. As the power gap continues to shrink between the United States and China over the coming decade, China is likely to grow more ambitious. Our present policy builds up China's comprehensive national power by fostering rapid Chinese economic growth but hopes that as it grows more powerful, China will not seek to act in ways commensurate with its new power.

The fundamental incoherence of the policy was put clearly enough by neoconservative scholars Dan Blumenthal and Thomas Donnelly: "If China's not an enemy, why arm ourselves and bolster alliances against it? If it is an enemy, why are we trading so promiscuously with it?"

It's a fair question. One has to wonder whether Zalmay Khalilzad—or anybody—has an answer. ■

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Not So Sweet

How Big Sugar made slaves out of guest workers

By Timothy P. Carney

THE WORK OF HARVESTING sugar-cane is grueling—even worse than picking cotton. With a knife, a cutter slices the cane stalk as close to the ground as possible. Standing in wet, soft muck soil, he chops off the leaves and the top of the stalk, tossing the cane into a pile. He does this thousands of times a day—stooping, cutting, standing, cutting, stacking, stooping. To guard against the sharp leaves and the swinging knife, cutters wear aluminum shields on their wrists and legs, as well as many layers, even in the hot Florida sun.

Given those conditions, sugar growers should have a hard time attracting workers. Indeed, it did not take long for the new sugar industry to get a bad name among the African-American migrant workers in the South, who soon learned to steer clear of cane fields in favor of fruits and vegetables.

By the 1930s, Big Sugar had a labor problem, and so it turned where Big Business often turns: Big Government. The New Deal operated as corporate welfare in many ways, but nowhere did it serve the exploitative purposes of big business as thoroughly as in the sugar-cane fields of south Florida. Most objectionable—and most relevant to today's policy debates—was how FDR and Big Sugar teamed up to use open borders and guest-worker programs to subvert the free market.

The sugar industry in America has never really operated in a free market. Cane sugar in Florida wouldn't exist if the state government hadn't drained the Everglades. It would disappear if the

Army Corps of Engineers didn't permanently alter the landscape and manage it at taxpayer expense to expose the muck soil and keep the water level just right for the growers.

Washington also provides subsidies to all sugar farmers in the form of loans collateralized by sugar—about 18 cents per pound. The world price of sugar is usually around 10 cents per pound or less, but the federal government also drastically limits sugar imports, ensuring a domestic price of about twice that. Uncle Sam also subsidizes private sugar storage facilities.

It is only fitting then that the federal government would subsidize Big Sugar's labor needs. The nature of the work in the cane fields was only half the downside of cutting cane. The companies required their cutters to live in prison-like barracks that reeked of sweat and urine and eat sub-par food, according to many accounts. The deceptive pay practices yielded a federal investigation into U.S. Sugar.

Unsurprisingly, workers in Florida and the Deep South soon wanted nothing to do with cane fields. By 1932, the horrors of cane cutting were so well known that when U.S. Sugar advertised for 100 cutters in Fort Lauderdale, only two men applied. A better public-relations campaign would be needed, and so FDR's New Deal provided it.

The United States Employment Service went far and wide advertising the dire need for sugar-field workers—essentially doing the sugar growers' PR on the taxpayer dime. This didn't work either.

In the spring of 1943, while so many American men were off at war, Big Sugar declared there was a labor shortage. In Florida, however, a national wartime ban on "pleasure driving" had shut down race tracks, surely leaving some unemployed behind. Harry McAlpin reported in the *Chicago Defender*, "the figures of one government agency show that 45,000 [farm] workers are now available in [Florida]—but not at the exploitation wages big farmers want to pay."

The cane fields of South Florida were the 1940s version of "jobs Americans won't do." The work itself is grueling, dangerous, and monotonous, and very little at the time could be done to change that. But danger, monotony, and difficulty are not sufficient to make a job unfillable. Alaska crab fishermen, U.S. Marines, international spies, Hollywood stuntmen all have jobs that satisfy at least two of those conditions. These employers, therefore, are forced to make the jobs attractive.

Alaska crab fishermen sometimes work 20 hours a day on the icy decks of big iron boats tossing around in the frigid Bering Sea. It is terrifying, lonely, exhausting, and potentially deadly work. To make it worth the deckhands' while, ship operators typically split the profits evenly with all their employees. This means that in one month, a fisherman could pull in tens of thousands of dollars.

The labor market requires that employers trying to fill harsh jobs offer recruits good pay or other bonuses. But big government's specialty is distorting

market conditions, frequently in the favor of big business.

Enter Franklin Roosevelt's guest-worker program. Through an intergovernmental agreement on March 16, 1943, Roosevelt launched what later became the British West Indies Program (BWI). This opened the gates to farm workers from Jamaica, the Bahamas, and other Caribbean isles.

But FDR's plan was not just about opening the borders to these workers. Under FDR's BWI program, the federal government became an active partner with the sugar growers. Historian David McCally writes, "Between 1943 and 1947, the United States government played a direct role in negotiating employment contracts for offshore laborers and paid the cost of round-trip transportation for all workers between their homes and the United States."

Once again, Big Sugar was getting by on Big-Government largesse, but Uncle Sam's help in this situation was not merely in footing the boat fare for the cane cutters. Roosevelt's BWI program—and the guest-worker program that it grew into—provided sugar growers with the ideal worker.

One promotional film by the Florida Sugar Cane League claims, "To watch a West Indian wield a cane knife is to see a centuries-old art," reports Alec Wilkinson, author of *Big Sugar*. The clear implication was that West Indian workers are ideal for cutting cane because of some innate skill. In truth, they are the model cane workers because a workforce constantly under threat of deportation is a docile workforce.

West Indian laborers entering Florida under these immigration programs were even more beholden to their employers than were the black field hands of the decades before. Their vulnerability at the hands of their bosses extended far beyond the typical disadvantages a foreigner suffers in a new land. The BWI

cane cutter was allowed into the country explicitly to perform one job. This meant that if his boss didn't like him, he could send the worker out of the country.

Wilkinson writes that a sugar boss in the field who thought one cutter was working too slowly could "check him out"—send him back to his barracks with no wages for the day. If one worker was checked out three times in one season, the sugar farmer would send him back to his home country. If this was before the midpoint of the cane-cutting season, the worker himself was obligated, by the terms of his contract, to pay his roundtrip fare.

This advantage to the farmers of hiring temporary foreign workers was no accident. It was deliberate. In 1940, one grower wrote to the U.S. Department of Agriculture that if Washington were to help them find labor, the Bahamas would be a far better source than either the U.S. or its territory Puerto Rico. "The vast difference between the Bahama Island labor and domestic, including Puerto Rican," wrote the farmer, "is that labor transported from the Bahama Islands can be deported and sent home, if it does not work, which cannot be done in the instance of labor from domestic United States or Puerto Rico."

This moment of brutal honesty by a sugar farmer in the months before World War II gives us insight into the mind of shrewd employers throughout the decades. If your worker's visa limits him to working for you, you become, in effect, the government.

A typical employer in a free market has only the power to stop paying his worker or possibly sue him if he doesn't perform promised services. But under guest-worker programs, the employer gains the power of deportation.

In recognition of the fact that the employer/guest-worker relationship exists outside of the free market, the

federal government provides special protection for these guest workers, guaranteeing adequate housing, food, and other conditions. In the rest of the economy, the enforcement mechanism for the worker's needs is called freedom of movement. In a free market, a dissatisfied worker can walk away from a job. In the 20th-century indentured servitude of the cane fields, no such freedom existed, dragging Big Government even deeper into the realm of business.

In 1982, workers walked off the sugar field when their bosses told them the wage they would pay for a row of sugar that day. The price wasn't worth their sweat and blood, they surmised. The next day, law enforcement greeted the workers outside their barracks, and 300 cutters were soon deported. Future cane cutters didn't try to haggle much over wages.

Cutting sugarcane in Florida was a job Americans wouldn't do. But that is true only when you take into account the whole package of cane-cutting employment. What Americans wouldn't do was subject themselves to slavery, where not only their wages but their right to hold any job in America was dependent on remaining in the good graces of the boss, on whom they also depended for food and shelter.

George W. Bush's guest-worker program will surely not be identical to Franklin D. Roosevelt's. But Bush talks of a plan "to match willing foreign workers with willing U.S. employers." These workers would be here temporarily, and they would be here to work in one specific job. They would be powerless *vis-à-vis* their employers. That would be near indentured servitude—a job Americans won't do. ■

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Wizards of Oz

The Austalian intellectual scene has neocons of its own.

By R.J. Stove

PROBABLY THERE IS NO good time for talking about today's mainstream Australian intellectual life. Still, some times are better than others, and Condoleezza Rice's recent visit to antipodean shores perhaps forms an adequate cue for reflections of the "whither Australian thinking?" kind.

Our intelligentsia was not always so disheartening a subject. Turn the clock back to Australia 40 years ago, and this intelligentsia enjoyed much better health. Three serious, reasonably high-brow yet generalist current-affairs periodicals existed: *Quadrant* (affiliated with the Congress for Cultural Freedom and with England's now-defunct *Encounter*); *Nation* (nothing to do with its American namesake); and *Twentieth Century* (Jesuit-controlled, but free from the drivel soon ubiquitous among Jesuit spokesmen worldwide). Somewhat below this level, yet recognizably literate and conscientious, were *News Weekly* (Cold War Catholic with a Chesterbellocian streak), *The Bulletin* (local equivalent of *Time* or France's *L'Express*), and the short-lived *Australian International News Review* (which the John Birch Society first favored and then dropped).

Australia's newspapers exhibited intelligence unimaginable now. Sunday tabloids would be replete with writers like A.D. Hope, one of Australia's three or four best poets, discussing Milton or Wordsworth. Even the cryptic crosswords demanded—and would continue till the early 1970s to demand—impressive cultural literacy, as all of us who had crossword-addicted mothers will

recollect. ("Rob?" "Yep?" "17th-century Italian composer, second letter 'A.'" "Would 'Carissimi' fit?" "Uh-huh.")

Perhaps the best reason for mentioning such historical trivia is that none of it could have occurred if conventional theories of educational excellence through taxpayer-funded "diversity" were accurate. Australia in 1966 was pre-mass-tourism. Its White Australia Policy, enfeebled that year *de jure*, flourished *de facto*. Probably one-fifth, quite possibly one-fourth, of Australians openly considered Britain "home." Adelaide, then the most Anglophile city of an Anglophile nation, resembled some English cathedral town strangely planted in a blast-furnace climate. The brave new universities that veteran Prime Minister Sir Robert Menzies had been persuaded during the early 1960s to establish still amounted to little more than a few makeshift lecture halls. Direct governmental arts funding lay almost entirely in an unseen, unwanted future.

Above all, Australia still reposed (or, if we are to believe subsequent New Class propaganda, groaned) under the most sexually repressive censorship of any Western state except De Valera's Ireland and Maurice Duplessis's Québec. Very rarely a newsagent would risk selling *Playboy* clad in brown paper; but today's whole *Cleo-Cosmo-Maxim* junk-magazine ethos—"Mischa [Barton]: 'I like a bit of girl-on-girl pashing,'" yelled this week's newsstands—was inconceivable. Lenny Bruce's 1962 Sydney performances had dismally flopped. We were forbidden to read *Tropic of Cancer*; never mind *Lolita*. Oh, the

agony ... yet somehow most of us survived these barriers to the fulfillment of our collective id.

Jump forward to Australia in 1990 and the intellectual picture is still reasonably attractive, for all the intervening malignities of victim politics and broiler-house colleges. The Berlin Wall's collapse had temporarily abashed Stalinism's sycophants. While most magazines in the above list had long since died, others lived on, either entirely new periodicals or, more often, established periodicals given new strength. We Australian authors grumbled, as authors anywhere will. Yet by today's criteria, 1990 marked heaven for us. If *Quadrant* rejected a submission, we could try it at—and, if successful, expect tolerable payment from—*The Independent Monthly*, *The Adelaide Review*, *The Sydney Review*, *IPA* [Institute of Public Affairs] *Review*, *Education Monitor*, *24 Hours*, or *Australia and World Affairs*. These publications, not one of which currently survives in its 1990 form (several have folded), imposed basic standards of authorial etiquette back then. Plagiarism, four-letter words, advertorials, and mere *ad hominem* invective were simply unacceptable. Had any Cassandra suggested that this worthwhile intellectual activity would have turned by 2006 into a smoking ruin, we would have laughed in her face and told her to join the Club of Rome's alarmists.

So, in the dying words of Steve McQueen's character in "Bullitt": "What the hell happened?" To summarize outrageously, neocons happened—and relentlessly dumbed-down neocons at

that: we are not talking imitation Gertrude Himmelfarbs. More specifically, just as Stalinists and Trotskyists could be relied on in the Cold War to infiltrate labor unions too somnolent or simply too amiable to maintain any defenses against them, so Australian neocons have succeeded precisely where alternative intellectual establishments were too somnolent, too amiable, or too compromised by their own unreconstructed totalitarianism to offer serious resistance in any battle of ideas. These intellectual establishments have tended to illustrate two attitudes: paganism and pragmatism.

As to Australian paganism, one wonders if any American can really appreciate how deep it runs. Accustomed as he is, at home, to what might be called a low-level Spanish Civil War, where the Foxmans and Dershowitzes at least pay Christianity the compliment of hating it rather than despising it, he usually finds it hard to envisage a land like Australia where most people are at least as profoundly indifferent to Christianity as to Shinto. Prime Minister John Howard, for all his reverence towards the Bush administration, would no more imitate Bush's public praise of Christ than he would glorify Calvin. And if this queasiness over invoking religion afflicts Howard, who by his colleagues' standards is positively heart-on-sleeve about his Christian belief—he is a mainline Protestant—imagine how much more absurd such belief seems to compatriots on his left, whether or not they support America's Iraq intervention.

It is symptomatic that even educated Australians can usually cherish only one American public intellectual at a time. Once it was John Dewey. Later the golden boy was Edmund Wilson, occasionally relieved by Lionel Trilling. Today, surprise surprise, it is Christopher Hitchens (except on the hard Left, where it is Chomsky). Christophobia is,

in other words, the crucial résumé item. You could fire water cannon into any Australian university department and be sure of not even sprinkling a student who had been taught of Russell Kirk's, Allen Tate's, or Richard Weaver's existence. Hey, Kirk, Tate, and Weaver were not only Christians, they were Christian elitists. How could an undergraduate possibly be allowed to study them?

As regards antipodean pragmatism, this too is hard for Americans to appreciate. *TAC* readers are familiar with the overall genealogies by which numerous American neocons can trace their intellectual descent from Trotskyism, but few if any Australian neocons have a similar ideological background. For every ex-Trot or ex-Maoist now cheering on Bush in Iraq, there are half a dozen pundits whose intellectual lineage is of the most exiguous sort. When a man can be appointed *Quadrant's* editor—as was incumbent editor P.P. McGuinness in 1998—on the strength of a career whose apex consisted of laboring for the Moscow Narodny Bank during the Brezhnev epoch, one's own idiocy in opposing Communism becomes manifest.

Maybe the best-known among Australian neocons is Andrew Bolt, of Melbourne's tabloid *Herald Sun*. Bolt began as a staffer for retired Sen. Bob Collins, last heard of in connection with 2004 accusations of repeated sex crimes. There is no evidence that these accusations are connected with Bolt's shrill censure of his hate-objects (from Mel Gibson down) as "homophobic." When not thus occupied, Bolt—once a talented thinker—basks in applause from that well-known cradle of Christian civilization, Turkish Cyprus. The preface to Bolt's 2005 book, *Still Not Sorry*, risks almost universal Bronx-cheers by extolling Rupert Murdoch's steadfast championship of free speech. Contemplating such gaffes makes newly relevant a prayer by Spanish historian Salvador de

Madariaga: "Let us always hope that our adversaries are stupider than we are."

If Bolt is the neocon your nearest knitting circle would invite to tea, Sydney's inexpressible chickenhawk blogger Tim Blair is the neocon your mother warned you about. He acquired his intellectual credentials by editing the pornographic magazine *Melbourne Truth*. Blair is determined to cram into his prose more obscenities than a gangsta in rut. Presumably he craves the linguistic equivalent of Madeleine Albright's attitude to weaponry: "What's the point of all these four-letter words if we can't use them?" Rather than engage with Robert Fisk's books regarding Lebanon and other Middle East countries, Blair, whose own experience of Middle Eastern physical peril stops with the local shish-kebab diner, described Fisk on Oct. 14, 2002 as "the f-king dumbest dumb f-k of them all."

Blair combines his sewer mouth with paranoid defensiveness about the pubescents who supply most of his blog's comments, hailing them on March 14, 2005 as "intelligent and discerning." Anyone who trawls through these threads, eager to learn what such "intelligent and discerning" savants might be like, encounters more smutty allusions than any half-dozen "South Park" episodes will disgorge. If these scribes are among Blair's "intelligent and discerning" readers, heaven preserve us from the stupid and indiscriminating ones. The possibility exists that Blair cannot be bothered to read his own blog. If true, this would be creditable to his literary taste; but it seems decidedly self-defeating, not least when so much of his blog's content parasitically relies on neocon sources in America.

Among the few intellectual vices of which Blair stands guiltless is that of coddling storm-troopers. *Quadrant's* McGuinness can no longer claim even this modest innocence, happy though he

has been to bawl out others for insufficient background checking. The March 2005 *Quadrant* included an article on Solzhenitsyn, harmless in itself, by one Michael Brander. What McGuinness, almost uniquely among Australians in positions of media power, never realized was that Brander is a convicted, unrepentant neo-Nazi, who during the 1990s acquired national prominence for assaulting Adelaide's Asian element with—wait for it—a flagpole. (Brander's purported justification for doing so was that Asians comprised "Hepatitis B carriers," "gooks," and "prostitutes.") Member of Parliament Michael Danby keelhaunched McGuinness in the House of Representatives on March 13, 2005: "What kind of a magazine or magazine editor publishes an article by someone without checking his background or sources—something, to quote Mr. McGuinness, which only takes one minute on Google? ... I ask Mr. McGuinness: what should happen to people in glass houses who throw stones?" McGuinness is fortunate in his Australian residence. At an American publication, such folly would have rendered him unemployable.

Yet it would be unfair to call McGuinness's editorship uniquely dire. Hardly had *IPA Review* recovered from a nationally famous plagiarism case, than it suffered further humiliation from a front-page exposé in Melbourne's *Sunday Age* broadsheet, which revealed federal government kickbacks the IPA had obtained for its "objective" NGO-related research. *The Adelaide Review* has turned into a yuppie restaurant-lifestyle guide. As for *News Weekly*, it has devised a recent, original contribution to the *trahison des clercs*. Through processes chronicled in 2005 by Greg Roberts, a reporter for *The Australian*, *News Weekly* has consigned editorial control to the Lyndon LaRouche brigade, with purges of contributors publicly hos-

tile to this sect. How this strategy can be reconciled with *News Weekly's* previous role as a predominantly Catholic publication—since the LaRouchies are forever condemning Belloc and Chesterton as "pro-fascist"—is obscure.

To look for intelligent, genuinely independent commentary from such compromised organs is, predictably, to ask for the moon. Take the whole brouhaha (amply covered in the U.S.) concerning Professor Andrew Fraser of Sydney's Macquarie University, who dared to question the national multiculti consensus. This *cause célèbre* has attracted almost no discussion in Australian print media, with two courageous exceptions: *The Australian's* education supplement and remarks by *Sydney Morning Herald* columnist Michael Duffy. Even historian Keith Windschuttle, who has himself experienced the sharp end of rent-a-mob umbrage, felt compelled to denounce Fraser by rehashing all the "race does not exist" cant he had procured *en bloc* from Franz Boas, Ashley Montagu, and suchlike Marxian-egalitarian liars. One really hoped Windschuttle, when attacking Fraser, would avoid such commissar-speak as "deserves to be consigned to the dustbin of history." One hoped in vain.

Are promising signs perceptible amid the gloom? A few. *Annals Australasia*, hitherto concerned exclusively with Catholic teaching, has recently broadened its approach to include *la culture générale*, thereby taking up the intellectual slack that *Quadrant*, especially, has left. *Quadrant* itself does not actively prohibit all autonomous thought; it merely rations it out with Soviet-type stinginess. When *The Australian's* features editor Tom Switzer can still print serious analyses of Iraq by Scott McConnell, Leon Hadar, and other names familiar to *TAC* audiences, all is not lost. Indeed, when erstwhile *National Interest* editor Owen Harries

can deliver to Melbourne's Australian-American Association a coolly piercing speech entitled "The Short Unhappy Life of the Bush Doctrine," cautious optimism might be in order. Harries said:

Doctrines deal in broad categories and general principles, not in particular circumstances and differences—and circumstances are usually vital in international politics. Doctrines are strong on connections but weak on distinctions, bold in assertion but weak on qualification. They tend to lump together what both precision and prudence dictate should be treated separately. ... When a doctrine is couched in moralistic terms, as tends to be the case, the criteria of 'loyalty' and 'betrayal' tend to replace those of wisdom and prudence, success or failure.

Then again, temporarily fortified by such sober commonsense, one returns to *Quadrant* and examines its March 2006 issue. Whereupon the first words to leap from the page are a supercilious comment from former *Reader's Digest* editor Frank Devine. Addicted to the royal plural, and effortfully explaining why Australia must forever relish the prospect of more and better beachside *jihad*, Devine intones: "We are embarrassed by white supremacist aspects of our past ... it's a healthy sign that we are discomfited by the misjudgments and excesses of our forebears and that to most of us, a White Australia Policy now seems as bizarre as cigarette smoking."

Gentle reader, in that quotation you have seen the future of Australia's intelligentsia—and its name is Marie Antoinette. To adopt the establishmentarian threat hurled at troublesome Hollywood starlets: would you really want to eat lunch in this town again? ■

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Arts & Letters

FILM

[*Mission: Impossible III*]

Cruise Control

By Steve Sailer

WITH TOM CRUISE, the glass is always about five-eighths full. Sure, as an actor he's memorable merely as the personification of youthful energy, and as a celebrity the Scientologist has turned into a pest as his once bulletproof public-relations skills have broken down.

Yet Cruise's movies are consistently better than they need to be. Since 2001, he's made the artistically ambitious science-fiction films "Vanilla Sky" and "Minority Report," the silly but magnificent-looking "Last Samurai," and the limited but effective "Collateral" and "War of the Worlds." Only Russell Crowe's films have been consistently better, but he seems too drunk and disorderly to work as often as Cruise. Hollywood likes its leading men to set an example for the whole film crew. "Superstars do not get where they are by throwing temperamental fits, malingering on the set, or not following directions," a talent agent explained to reporter Edward Jay Epstein.

Now Cruise is starring in the action blockbuster "Mission: Impossible III," which, being the second sequel to the remake of an old TV show, sounded dreadful. "M:I-3," as it has been designated with a superfluity of punctuation, will, however, frustrate the hopes of everybody who wants to see Tom Cruise fall on his face. While it's a little too quick-witted to rake in a huge pile of

money, it's an expertly concocted summer barnburner.

Since 1983's "Risky Business," the boyish Cruise has epitomized the shift in American preferences about the age of our heroes that began with the replacement of the wise Dwight Eisenhower by the vigorous John F. Kennedy. Many 1930s actors, especially hard drinkers like Spencer Tracy and Clark Gable, looked older than their years, while today's health-crazed male leads—with the exception of that throwback George Clooney—seem almost adolescent. (Cruise, however, isn't quite Dorian Gray: like many 43-year-olds, his nose keeps growing.)

Maybe you just need more energy to remain a star these days.

Cruise is not a great actor, but he has made himself a very good movie star through his Stakhanovite self-discipline. Few have responded more productively to the exhausting responsibilities of stardom in the post-studio era. In the 1930s, studios owned actors, whose responsibilities were limited to learning their lines and socializing glamorously with other screen idols. In today's entrepreneurial Hollywood, where each film is a unique business enterprise, a major star is in effect his own CEO, choosing projects, directors, and writers.

Cruise was long the champion at promoting movies, somehow persuading each interviewer that the scribe's hackneyed questions were uniquely penetrating. More innovatively, as critic Nicholas Stix wrote, "With time, the cannier movie stars, such as Tom Cruise, employed their lawyers and publicists to reinvent the studio publicity system, whereby they would contractually control every aspect of their publicity campaigns, with only those media organizations getting puff interviews that got

every question cleared in advance, and that promised in writing not to engage in journalism."

But nepotism got the best of Cruise after he replaced his pit-bull publicist Pat Kingsley with his sister. Last year, Cruise's usual Teddy Roosevelt-like "hypomania"—that desirable state of tremendous energy combined with self-control—appeared to give way to a near-maniac phase during his laughably public courtship of Katie Holmes.

Still, despite Cruise apparently "jumping the couch," "M:I-3" turns out terrific, although I can barely remember what it was about a day later. The plot—a James Bond-style farrago set in random dazzling locations such as Vatican City and Shanghai—makes little sense overall, but each absurd twist is rationalized so cleverly that you don't have time to figure out why it was illogical before something else blows up.

As real-life American spy agencies decline in competence, their movie counterparts are developing godlike proficiencies. Cruise's character Ethan Hunt works for the Impossible Mission Force, which defends our way of life from blond criminal masterminds and their excellent diction, as portrayed by that American Alec Guinness, Philip Seymour Hoffman, who won the Best Actor Oscar in March. An odd misstep in this otherwise carefully crafted movie is that the suspense builds to a climactic fistfight between our nearly superhuman hero and pudgy little Truman Capote.

Lovely Michelle Monaghan adds an emotional element previously lacking in the series as Cruise's bride-in-jeopardy. My wife says she cried three times, even though her usual reaction to summer blockbusters is "Explosions make me sleepy." ■

Rated PG-13

BOOKS

[*Look Homeward, America: In Search of Reactionary Radicals and Front-Porch Anarchists*, Bill Kauffman, ISI Books, 211 pages]

All-American Anarchists

By Rod Dreher

"AFFECTION FOR THE proliferating variety and mystery of human existence, as opposed to the narrowing uniformity, egalitarianism, and utilitarian aims of most radical systems"—that's the second of Russell Kirk's Six Canons of Conservative Thought. "Affection" is far too domesticated a word to describe Bill Kauffman's feelings in this regard. His *Look Homeward, America* is a rollicking, book-length mash note to kooks, cranks, holy fools, wild men (and women), prophets, and sundry all-American nonconformists who embody the manic genius of this country of ours.

Understand, this book is not for everybody. Kauffman is no party man, God bless him. He is an ardent eclectic with a soft spot for just about anybody with the moxie to buck the system. It takes a certain kind of conservative to appreciate Kauffman's gonzo vision; I happen to be that kind of right-winger and found *Look Homeward, America* tonic for a soul weary of the philistine populism and straitjacketed know-nothingness that dominates mainstream conservatism today. If you are the kind of conservative who despairs over the chain-store, geography-of-nowhere, slob-in-the-grey-velour-sweatsuit consumerist crapulence that is devouring the American cultural landscape like kudzu—well, Bill Kauffman is your man.

Here's Kauffman on Robert Gard, a Midwestern theater director who was a passionate regionalist:

Gard the evangelist knew that 'knowledge and love of place is a large part of the joy in people's lives. There must be plays that grow from all the countrysides of America, fabricated by the people themselves, born of their happiness and sorrow, born of toiling hands and free minds, born of music and love and reason. There must be many great voices singing out the legend and lore of America from a thousand hilltops...' You may dismiss this as sentimental claptrap, windy populist hokum. I don't.

Do you, reader? How you answer this question will determine how you respond to this book. For the most part, Kauffman's populist exuberance might best be described as Whitmanesque. But when he gets too gushy, one can't help thinking of Mickey Rooney, Judy Garland, and the golly-gee innocence of Busby Berkeley's barn.

I make a big deal about this issue because the reader should not be blindsided. This is a big old sloppy mess of a book, strange and charming and rhapsodic and even inspirational. It will make its receptive conservative readers reconsider what it means to be a true conservative and even what it means to be a true American. But it is also the kind of book that will leave quite a few conservatives scratching their heads and wondering if Kauffman is more a rocking-chair Romantic than red-state right-winger. Then again, in these sour and shipwrecked late days of Republican Party rule, it is both useful and pleasurable to read conservative writing this fresh and iconoclastic.

In truth, Kauffman doesn't really consider himself a conservative but rather an "Independent. A Jeffersonian. An anarchist. A (cheerful!) enemy of the state, a reactionary Friend of the Library, a peace-loving football fan." But his outsider status, as well as his fellow-traveling on the Right, gives him a terrific vantage point from which to reconsider the value to conservatives, especially traditionalists, of the life and work of Catholic

liberals Eugene McCarthy, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, and Dorothy Day.

What these great Americans most have in common, at least in Kauffman's telling, is their complexity, their humanity, and their willingness to be nobody's man—or woman—but their own. Kauffman revels in their flawed humanity. After reciting a litany of Pat Moynihan's sins, Kauffman concludes, "He is irreplaceable." The last paragraph of his meditation on Catholic Worker founder Day encapsulates what Kauffman finds so admirable in all his subjects:

The Little Way. That is what we seek. That—contrary to the ethic of personal parking spaces, of the dollar-sign god—is the American way. Dorothy Day kept to that little way, and that is why we honor her. She understood that if small is not always beautiful, at least it is always human.

Look Homeward, America hits a polemical peak when Kauffman lights into stuffed-shirt corporate Republicanism in, get this, a defense of the 19th-century labor hellraiser Mother Jones. "Mother Jones or Lamar Alexander: you tell me who's the real conservative!" Kauffman writes, after contrasting the laborite's view that working men deserved a wage that would allow women to stay home to care for their kids with the Tennessee senator's profitable devotion to day care for kids. Kauffman's jibe brings to mind Russell Kirk's observation that the family is the institution most important to conserve—a view that many latter-day conservatives support up to the point when it costs Big Business something.

Kauffman's finest chapter is his profile of Wendell Berry, the Kentucky farmer, poet, and essayist whose unshakable devotion to the land, to localism, and to the dignity of traditional life makes him both a great American and, to the disgrace of our age, a prophet without honor in his native land. (Kauffman: "Among the tragedies of contemporary politics is that Wendell Berry, as a man of place, has no place in a national political

discussion that is framed by Gannett and Clear Channel.”) Kauffman, like Berry, is a pacifist. I, like most people, am not, and despite the Iraq debacle, militant Islam does not grant us the luxury of being peaceable bystanders. Still, the discussion in this book of how war devastates communal and family life—and, in the modern industrial era, can lead to barbarism that mocks any pretense of humanity—cannot be easily gainsaid by the bellicose internationalists of the contemporary Right.

Kauffman can get carried away. His voice is strong, distinct, and engagingly poetic, but he takes you places that can be hard to follow and make you wonder about his judgment. (He reminds me of one of those big-hearted people who can't bear to turn away a stray dog.) We visit, for example, Carolyn Chute, a Maine novelist and gun enthusiast who, along with her illiterate husband, lives an aggressively unorthodox life in the Yankee backwoods. Let's just say that there is a fine line between hale eccentric and outright kook, and I'm not sure Kauffman recognizes it. “We could do worse than to heed our poets” is a characteristic Kauffmanian line, but some poets—paging Mr. Pound!—really are crackpots.

The book's only serious weakness, though, is its chronic digressiveness. In one typical passage, Kauffman ambles from fondly musing on the Black Panther Eldridge Cleaver(!) to a meditation on football and the American spirit. Huh? The chapter on American regionalist artists is studded with insightful miniatures on forgotten and near-forgotten creative types. But in trying to make a broader point about the value of local culture, Kauffman loses focus. The effect is of having just been led through a hodgepodge of an art gallery by a companionably pixilated docent.

Kauffman's worst indulgence on this point comes with the penultimate chapter, “What I Found While Hunting Civil War Artifacts,” which would have been more accurately titled “Obscure Local Oddballs I Esteem.” “May I first tell you about Millard Fillmore?” he asks. Come on, Bill, do you have to?

In the end, Kauffman seems to understand that the book is as much eulogy for what rock critic Greil Marcus once called the “old, weird America” as a celebration of same. There is, of course, no reason at all why any of us have to be prisoners of the zeitgeist, and all it takes to recover the America that Kauffman hymns is for creative people to refuse and resist the disorders of our age. Alas, the great American unwashed actually like their Wal-Mart, their cable TV, their junk culture. Kauffman and family roll into Columbus, Mississippi, hoping to see a *tableau vivant* out of some Delta Blues song and instead find a sullen teenager strung out on his boom-box and “four ladies with mellifluous Mississippi accents” sitting in a diner, chirruping happily about the plot of last night's episode of “Friends”:

I wanted to confront them, plead with them: Look. Here you are, citizens of the economically poorest yet culturally richest state in the Union, the state that gave us Eudora Welty, the Delta Blues, William Faulkner, Muddy Waters, Shelby Foote, and yet you not only consume but crave the packaged products of cocaine-addled East/West Coast greedheads who despise you as ignorant red-necks and stupid crackers. Get off your knees, Mississippi!

Preach it, Brother Billy. My heart's with you, even when my head can't follow. As it happened, I finished *Look Homeward, America* on a flight, put it away in my bag, then returned to the depressing, infuriating narrative of *Cobra II*, with its dismal tale of the Bush administration sophisters, calculators, and economists who, in violation of Kirk's fifth canon, tried to reconstruct the military and the Middle East upon abstract designs. The juxtaposition took me by surprise and made me realize that whatever Bill Kauffman's eccentricities and excesses, I know on whose side I'll take my stand. ■

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[*The Peace of Illusions: American Grand Strategy From 1940 to the Present*, Christopher Layne, Cornell University Press, 304 pages]

Lose Your Illusions

By Leon Hadar

AT SOME POINT while you're reading *The Peace of Illusions*, you may experience a “Matrix”-like moment. You know the feeling: when you suddenly recognize that reality as you understand it—that U.S. foreign policy since 1940 has been designed to protect Americans against threats to their national security—is actually a complex simulation created and manipulated by the powerful forces of the Machines—the foreign-policy establishment consisting of Washington's policymakers, the military-industrial complex, and Wall Street firms—that allows all of us to live mostly peaceful but occasionally very non-peaceful lives while the truth about our condition is hidden from us.

But being a “Neo”—that is, a “neo-realist”—you are troubled by the bloody occupation of Iraq, the mounting tensions with Iran and North Korea, and the growing sense that something is terribly wrong with our diplomacy. But you just can't put your finger on it. So you're browsing foreign-policy websites all through the night, reading the latest issue of *Foreign Affairs*, accessing the wisdom of Francis Fukuyama and Samuel Huntington, and searching for answers to those questions that prevent you from falling asleep. Is it possible that all the blame lies with President George W. Bush and his neocon advisors and their determination to maintain overwhelming U.S. geopolitical dominance, breaking sharply with what you assumed all along was the principle that guided earlier policymakers, that is, defending the U.S. from outside menaces?

But then what about our intervention in the civil war in Yugoslavia—Bosnia in 1995, Kosovo in 1999—and Haiti during the presidency of Bill Clinton? And it was Bush I who decided, after the Cold War ended in 1989, that we should continue to maintain troops in Korea and Japan and who invaded Panama that same year. Moreover, we don't hear John Kerry or Hillary Clinton challenging our commitment to protect Taiwan from China or criticizing our new military alliances with Poland, the Czech Republic, and the Baltic states. What does all of that—not to mention the two Gulf Wars—have to do with protecting the American homeland?

And then it happens. "You need to ask the question that drives our foreign policy," someone whispers in your ear. "Forget the 'Matrix,' neo-realist. Instead ask yourself what America's grand strategy has been from 1940 to the present." It is the voicing of that question that could start setting you free and help you put into words what you've suspected all along. As Christopher Layne reveals to you:

The story of American grand strategy over the past six decades is one of expansion, and that strategy's logic inexorably has driven the United States to attempt to establish its hegemony in the world's three most important regions outside North America itself: Western Europe, East Asia, and the Persian Gulf.

You need to wake up and let go of the old axioms—the foreign-policy fairy tales told to us by our leaders and pundits—that have guided your thinking about U.S. foreign policy. It's not about defense (as in the Department of Defense), stupid! The United States for most of the 20th century and leading straight into the invasion of Iraq has aimed at "extraregional hegemony," according to Layne, an associate professor at the Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University. Washington has deliberately strived for that global hegemonic role since the early 1940s and with added force since

the end of the Cold War. From that perspective, the Bush II administration's decision to invade Iraq and overthrow Saddam Hussein is just another example of continuity in the U.S. grand strategy that evolved after Pearl Harbor and achieved a certain climax when the Berlin Wall collapsed. As Layne puts it:

As we know it, that decision had nothing to do with 9/11, the war on terror, or Iraq's nonexistent weapons of mass destruction. Rather it was a war of hegemony intended to establish U.S. military and ideological dominance in the Persian Gulf and the Middle East.

Contrary to what we've been told again and again, the al-Qaeda attacks on New York and Washington, D.C., didn't "change everything":

After 9/11—and before—geopolitical dominance has been the ambition of the United States. If anything, 9/11 gave the Bush II administration's 'hegemonists' a convenient—indeed, almost providential—rationale for implementing policies they would have wanted to pursue in any event—including the 'regime change' in Iraq (and possibly Iran); the projection of U.S. power into the Middle East and Central Asia; a massive five-year defense buildup, which, when completed, will result in U.S. military outlays exceeding the combined defense budgets of the rest of the world's states; and a nuclear strategy that aims at attaining meaningful nuclear superiority over peer competitors and simultaneously ensuring that regional powers cannot develop the capacity to deter U.S. military intervention abroad. In short, the Bush II administration has sought security by expanding U.S. power and pursuing hegemony. In this respect it has stayed on—not left—the grand strategic path followed by the United States since the early 1940s.

On one level, Layne's *Peace of Illu-*

sions is a devastating critique and a remarkable revisionist history of U.S. foreign policy from World War II to the Iraq War that is grounded in extensive historical research and the original application of political-science theories that support the Layne's main thesis—that American foreign policy has been driven by one objective: global military, economic, and political hegemony in Eurasia. Memo to the lay reader: don't be put off by the political-science jargon. You'll be compensated by a lot of entertaining historical anecdotes, including counterfactual "What if?" scenarios like my favorite: what would have happened if the U.S. had not intervened militarily in the Great War? (Hint: we and the rest of the world would have been better off.)

On another level, this is a policy-oriented study that proposes a coherent grand strategy to replace the current one. Layne's alternative is offshore balancing, which is not a hegemonic but a counter-hegemonic strategy that posits that the only U.S. strategic interest at stake in Eurasia is preventing the emergence of a Eurasian hegemon. Note to policymakers and pundits in Washington: read this book. It might be too late to implement Layne's grand strategy, but you could still learn something.

As a historical study and theoretical analysis, *The Peace of Illusions* succeeds in demonstrating that America's extraregional hegemony is not driven by security considerations but by economic and political interests and by a powerful ideology. U.S. global military power provided the U.S. with the opportunity and means to seek hegemony in Western Europe and other parts Eurasia. But the real motivations that animated the hegemonic grand strategy are found at the domestic level. According to Layne, it was the economic and political "Open Door" strategy—in other words, American liberal (Wilsonian) ideology—that caused the United States to seek hegemony. The Open Door is a complex set of economic and political linkages between openness abroad, U.S. prosperity, and the security of America's "core values" domestically:

Since World War II, the Open Door has reflected what present-day U.S. policymakers call the virtuous circle (which is based on a circular logic): international economic openness and the spread of American ideology create peace and security for the United States, and the U.S. military presence in Europe, East Asia and the Middle East creates the conditions that allow for international economic openness and the spread of American ideology.

The Open Door assumes that the United States can only be secure if it enjoys absolute security. It's not surprising, therefore, that since World War II, U.S. policymakers have aimed at establishing unipolarity by reducing Britain to an adjunct of American might, by ensuring that Germany and Japan could never rise again as great powers, by eliminating the Soviet Union as a great power rival, by preventing Europe from emerging as a unified force that could challenge U.S. hegemony, and by eventually establishing the current U.S. global hegemonic posi-

tion. Two of the more controversial points that Layne makes are that even if there had been no Soviet threat the United States would have maintained a permanent presence in Western Europe after World War II and that the United States could have encouraged the formation of a Western European security power to contain the Soviet Union, creating the conditions for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the continent as early as the 1960s.

I personally wish that Layne had devoted an entire book—as opposed to one chapter in this book—to detailing policy prescriptions for a strategy of offshore balancing. Still, at a time when the U.S. foreign-policy establishment is divided between those who support total American primacy in the world (Bush II) and those who back a more selective engagement aimed at achieving that hegemony, an Empire Lite (favored by Democrats and those Republicans associated with Bush I), Layne's ideas are an intellectual breath of fresh air. His offshore strategy would have four key objectives:

- Insulating the United States from possible future great-power wars in Eurasia
- Avoiding the need for the United States to fight “wars of credibility” or unnecessary wars on behalf of client states
- Reducing the vulnerability of the American homeland to terrorism
- Maximizing both America's relative power in the international system and its freedom of action

Unlike America's current hegemonic grand strategy, offshore balancing is a multipolar strategy that can accommodate the rise of new great powers while simultaneously shifting or devolving to the great powers of Eurasia the primary responsibility for their own defense. By drawing back from Eurasia—terminating U.S. military alliances with Japan, Korea, and NATO; withdrawing U.S. troops from the Middle East immediately and more gradually disengaging militarily from Europe and Asia; and

accepting that other powers, including Iran, Japan, Korea, and Japan will “go nuclear”—the United States would give other states “a lot less reason to push back” against our interests, Layne argues. Rather than focusing their grand attention on the United States, other nations would pay more attention to their neighborhood rivals.

As an offshore balancer, the United States could maximize its relative power effortlessly by standing on the sidelines while other great powers enter into security competition with each other. And in fact, Eurasia would be more stable if, acting as an offshore balancer, the United States went ahead with strategic devolution and allowed other states to defend themselves. At the same time, the U.S. should be prepared to assist friendly nations with arms sales and technology transfers and maintain close military contacts with them. And it should be ready to reinsert U.S. military power into Eurasia in case the balance of power there collapses and U.S. interests are directly threatened by an aggressive hegemon.

All of this makes a lot of sense to me. But as Layne makes clear, the chances are slim that Washington will abandon its hegemonic grand strategy so long as it continues to serve the interests of powerful elites that will probably continue to dominate the U.S. foreign-policy establishment for some years to come. “It probably will take a major domestic political realignment—perhaps triggered by setbacks abroad or a severe economic crisis at home—to bring about a change in American grand strategy,” concludes Layne. In short, we'll probably be waiting a long time for “the One” who will lead us to freedom from the strategy of hegemony and overthrow the Machines that benefit from hegemonic policies. Bush and the neocons will soon be out of power, but we'll still be residing in the foreign-policy Matrix. ■

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[*Attention Deficit Democracy*,
James Bovard, Palgrave
Macmillan, 291 pages]

While You Were Sleeping

By Jesse Walker

IN NINE BOOKS and hundreds of articles, the libertarian muckraker James Bovard has returned repeatedly to three themes: government repression, government incompetence, and government deceit. All three go under the microscope in his newest tome, *Attention Deficit Democracy*, but the focus is on the deceit—and, even more, on the deceived. To Bovard, the public is so easily snookered that America's democratic rhetoric has become a fraud. "The 'will of the people,'" he writes, "is often simply a measure of how many people fell for which lies, how many people were frightened by which advertisements, and which red herrings worked on which target audiences. Rather than the 'will of the people,' election results are often only a one-day snapshot of transient mass delusions."

That isn't a passing flash of cynicism. He says it on the first page of the book, and he never goes long without declaring something similar. "In the same way that some battered wives cling to their abusive husbands, the more debacles the government causes, the more some voters cling to rulers." "After the 2004 election campaign, the clearest mandate is for people to be sheep with the president as their shepherd-in-chief." "Many voters don't understand or don't care about freedom." Other books attacking Leviathan read like a call to arms. This one reads like the despairing cry of a man who has issued many calls to arms already and has lost hope that any angry army of patriots will ever show up.

So *Attention Deficit Democracy* does not just give us the stacks of facts about official misbehavior that are Bovard's stock in trade. It offers reason after

reason that the American public neither knows nor cares what is being done in its name.

There is a long chapter, for example, about the ongoing torture scandal. It covers the extent of the abuses committed by American soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan—not just the humiliation documented in the Abu Ghraib photos, but electric shocks, anal rape with a chemical light, and violent beatings that sometimes left prisoners dead. It points out how few of the detainees at Abu Ghraib were actually involved with ter-

rorism. It makes a strong case that the maltreatment proceeded from official U.S. policy and not, as some apologists insist, from the misbehavior of a few bad apples.

But those are only secondary arguments. The real point of the chapter isn't the torture; it's the fact that the administration got away with it. "The Bush administration," Bovard writes, "has shown what it takes for the U.S. government to get away with torture: almost nothing—or just some happy talk about the spread of democracy and freedom.



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... The lack of reaction by most Americans is almost as damning as the torture itself."

Sometimes the book sets the policy-makers aside and focuses entirely on the failures of the public, scolding Americans for surveys that show 85 percent of young adults unable to find Afghanistan, Iraq, and Israel on a map, 72 percent of the country convinced that Saddam Hussein was "personally involved in the September 11 attacks," and a smaller but still depressing 15 percent guessing that "checks and balances" refer to "Negotiations between Congress and the President over a balanced federal budget." Bovard decries the decline of reading, the sad state of the schools, and the effectiveness of dumbed-down political rhetoric. The image he draws depicts not just an increasingly abusive state but a citizenry too swamped in "massive ignorance of public policy" to do anything about it.

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS MIGHT STAND FOR ELECTION, BUT THE GOVERNMENT ITSELF IS OUT OF OUR CONTROL.

Before I say any more about Bovard's portrait of the public, I should stress that I can't argue with his picture of the government. To be sure, I can quibble with a claim here and there. Bovard repeats, for example, the familiar canard that a 1999 UNICEF report on the Iraqi sanctions had estimated that they "had thus far killed half a million Iraqi children." Many news outlets—including *The Guardian*, which Bovard cites as his source—reported that UNICEF said this, but in fact the study itself addressed the results not just of the sanctions but of two wars and a reduced investment in health care. America's sanctions did contribute, according to an article by my former colleague Matt Welch, "to more than 100,000 deaths since 1990"—which is bad enough.

Such lapses are rare. If you'd like a well-documented collection of horror stories past and present, *Attention*

Deficit Democracy will dump a mountain of damning details in your lap, from William McKinley's brutal suppression of the Philippines insurgency to George W. Bush's manipulative use of terror alerts during the 2004 campaign. (At one point, the administration apparently attempted to undercut the Democratic convention with a "Code Orange" warning. It turned out to be based on evidence that had been gathering dust since before 9/11.)

But if I'm willing to endorse Bovard's criticisms of the government, I'm uneasy with his jeremiad against ignorance, which sometimes exists for good reason. In 1957, the economist Anthony Downs famously argued that voters exhibit "rational ignorance": to learn the ins and outs of government requires a large investment of time but offers very little payoff, given the rather small impact any single ballot will have on the system. As Downs

wrote, a voter "calculates the expected pay-offs of various sets of information bits. Before being compared with the cost of data, these returns must be drastically reduced to accord with the infinitesimal role that each citizen's vote plays in deciding the election. As a result, the returns are so low that many rational voters refrain from purchasing any political information *per se*. Instead they rely upon free data acquired accidentally."

Yes, it's appalling that 45 percent of the population cannot name the three branches of government and that nearly half—including, I gather, the president—believe Bush has the right to suspend the Constitution. But it shouldn't be surprising when someone doesn't pay attention to the workings of an institution he has few opportunities to influence. Bovard writes that one reason the state can act without fear of reprisals is that most people know so little about

what it does. That is true, but it's also true that one reason so few people study what the government does is that it can act without fear of reprisals. Government officials might stand for election, but the government itself is out of our control. If anything, it's impressive that so many people do become experts, often very rapidly, on one particular group of cops or regulators that suddenly intrudes into their lives—and that once roused, they sometimes manage to fight back.

To his credit, Bovard declares it "unrealistic to expect the typical American to become a devoted reader of both the *Congressional Record* and *Federal Register*, or even to consistently check the footnotes in dissenting Supreme Court opinions." It's not completely clear just how much he expects—as opposed to wants—the average citizen to know about politics; the important thing, he argues, is that our ignorance do as little damage as possible. And so he calls for a political system that will not self-destruct in spite of the ignorance or laziness of common citizens. He doesn't go into a lot of detail about this, but the ideal he outlines is easily recognized as the constitutional Republic favored by limited-government libertarians.

Such a system would still be democratic—elections, as Bovard acknowledges, can be "a means for people to protect themselves against rulers"—but it would not elevate democracy over liberty. If there are no meaningful restraints on its power, an elected government can be just as repressive as an unelected one. "There is no way to revive self-government," Bovard writes, "without slashing government power."

That's excellent advice. But I'm not quite sure, given the pessimism that suffuses this volume, whether Bovard really expects us couch potatoes to bring the state down to size. ■

Jesse Walker is managing editor of Reason and author of Rebels on the Air: An Alternative History of Radio in America.

This Little Piggy Popped Pills



I thought it a nice touch when the D.C. fuzz escorted Congressman Patrick Kennedy to his home after he slammed his car into a barricade

just blocks from the Capitol a few weeks ago. This is what cops do for a living. They do not test drunken drivers, they limo them home. The fact that Kennedy was speeding, was zonked out, and could hardly stand up was of no consequence. What's a little booze and drugs when one's a Kennedy? People pay taxes in order for the police to be present when politicians in Washington don't play by the rules. A female member of the House slaps a security guard doing his duty and then gets to call a press conference and charge racism. So what else is new? The egregious Kofi Annan, head of the squeaky-clean U.N., gets a buddy to vote for a \$500,000 award for Kofi and soon after taps the buddy to head a U.N. environmental program. That, after all, is what friends are for.

When George Orwell published *Animal Farm*, he received a note from an official at the British Ministry of Information. "It would be less offensive if the predominant caste in the fable were not pigs. I think the choice of pigs as the ruling caste will no doubt give offence to many people ..." The book's ending is my favorite. "All animals are equal—but some animals are more equal than others." Well, all I can say is the Kennedys have been playing the equality card since time immemorial, except when it comes to meeting common people, like the Los Angeles airport guard whom Patrick Kennedy assaulted when the guard objected to the congressman trying to squeeze an oversize piece of luggage through a metal detector. But not to worry, it's all in the Kennedy equal-up-to-a-point elitist tradition. Try to run for it, deny, then give a press conference and go into rehab. End of story.

America's bipartisan elite has nothing on the French and British aristocracy of the 18th century. For years our elite has encouraged trade deficits, offshoring jobs and technology, a growing foreign debt, and unrestricted immigration. American workers have suffered immensely, with declining pay, loss of manufacturing jobs, and increasing part-time jobs without benefits. Corporate high rollers have, however, done well because shedding workers is the easiest way to make the bottom line look good.

Income distribution in the United States has not been so unequal since before the Second World War. Executive over-compensation is the main cause of this. The neoconservative policy agenda—free trade, belligerence towards all save Israel, huge military spending—also helps the inequality. According to one

Mind you, there are hundreds, perhaps thousands of piggies. The former Exxon Mobil chairman comes to mind, as do others from Occidental Petroleum and Pfizer. Citigroup's Sanford Weill is right up there with the head pigs also. And let us not forget World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz. He has made a seamless transition from being a flack for the military-industrial complex to being a flack for U.S. banks and corporations. Wolfowitz knows the score. He got out in time, where Iraq is concerned. Despite being the lightning rod behind America's greatest political and strategic blunder, he was rewarded with a job that is a public-relations winner. He is supposed to be helping the poor with money from the rich. In actual fact, the World Bank also builds giant industrial enterprises that poor countries don't need that serve to undercut American workers. Halliburton, Bechtel, Pfizer are among the beneficiaries. But Wolfie emerges smelling like the proverbial rose—as did the grotesque Robert McNamara, who led us to victory

CORPORATE HIGH ROLLERS HAVE DONE WELL BECAUSE SHEDDING WORKERS IS THE EASIEST WAY TO MAKE THE BOTTOM LINE LOOK GOOD.

poll, CEOs at companies that outsource the most U.S. jobs are rewarded with the biggest paychecks. The ratio of average CEO pay to worker pay was 431 to 1 in 2004. The biggest CEO pay took place among defense contractors. Something is very wrong here, as they say.

My favorite piggy is of course David H. Brooks, CEO of bulletproof-vest maker DHB Industries, who pocketed 180 million big ones, spent \$2 million on his child's bar mitzvah, and then saw the Marines recall more than 5,000 of the vests after they proved useless. So what's a few dead Marines when an expensive bar mitzvah is involved?

in Vietnam and in the middle of the debacle was awarded the presidency of the World Bank for a job well done.

And so it goes, my friends. Unlike the Roman emperor who named his horse as first consul, we have not gone that far. But capitalism has come a long way since people built industries from scratch—and employed people to build them. Now the takeover is king. Hilaire Belloc called it money shuffling. I call it a Gadarene lust for fame and attention. Still, there is good news. If you have a drink too many, not to worry. The cops will take you home for free, and everything will be hunky-dory. ■

No Pet Left Behind



**Hurricane Katrina
evacuee Tristan
Carter is reunited
with her cat,
Cupcake.**

ANIMAL WELFARE ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE HUMANE SOCIETY of the United States helped rescue thousands of animals after Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast. Private groups stepped in because government agencies had no rescue or transportation plans to help animals. Many people remained in a dangerous setting because they simply wouldn't leave their best friends.

The Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards (PETS) Act—S. 2548 by Sens. Ted Stevens (R-AK) and Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ) and H.R. 3858 by Reps. Tom Lantos (D-CA) and Chris Shays (R-CT)—would require that local and state governments develop disaster plans for animals. Pets are part of the family, and no pet should be left behind.

Call the congressional switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask your federal lawmakers to support the PETS Act. Or take action by visiting our website below.

www.hsus.org/petsact

Join animal lovers around the country on June 11th for nationwide "Party Animals" events to support the PETS Act! Learn more at partyanimals.hsus.org.

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